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HISTORY OF NEW RICHLAND AND
WILTON VILLAGES, WASECA
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History of

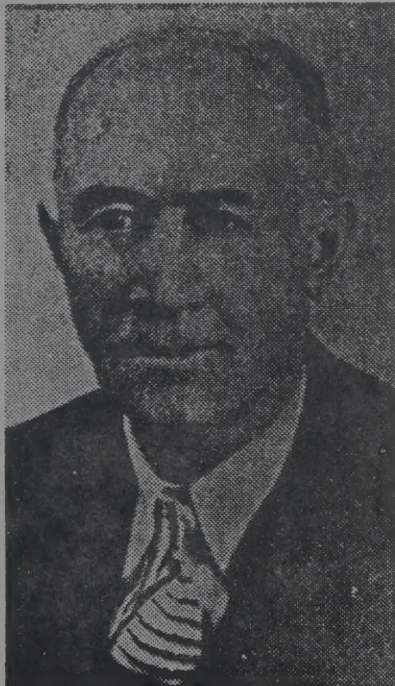
New Richland
and Wilton
Villages

Waseca County, Minnesota

History of
**New Richland
and Wilton
Villages**
Waseca County, Minnesota

Published by the
WASECA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
March 1962

Compiled by Herman Peterson



H. A. Panzram

He sparked the idea
of forming the
Waseca County Historical Society
which was organized on
February 26, 1938.

Mr. Panzram
served as the first president
of the Society.

HISTORY OF NEW RICHLAND VILLAGE

NORWEGIAN SETTLERS IN 1856 OPENED UP NEW RICHLAND TOWNSHIP

I have been asked to give a short history of the village of New Richland, but I am going back to 1856, when the first settlers of New Richland township arrived from Norway. In this group were 42 people including children. They settled in the vicinity where the LeSueur River church was later built and where it still stands. This is the highest point in Waseca county, 1,200 feet above sea level. This congregation observed its centennial on June 17, and 18, 1961. Joel O. Rustad is the present pastor.

In 1857 another group of 64 immigrated from Norway and settled in the eastern part of New Richland township. In 1858, a group of 24, also from Norway, arrived and settled in New Richland township. In 1859-60 several other groups arrived from Norway and they settled in New Richland and Otisco townships.

I have a complete list of all the Norwegian immigrants who settled in New Richland township in the late fifties, but I am only going to list the early settlers who with their descendants were, and are, linked with the history of the village of New Richland. They are as follows: Mr. and Mrs. Ole K. Hagen and son, Knut O. Hagen, who became the father of Dr. Henry Hagen; Mr. and Mrs. Even O. Strenge; Mr. and Mrs. Vebjorn Anderson and children; Mrs. Gunder (Sophia) Gunderson; Mrs. K. L. Gunderson and Carl A. Sampson; Mr. and Mrs. Iver Anderson and daughters, Karen; Mrs. Marls Marlson and Anne; Mrs. Hans Anderson; Hans A. Sunde; Mr. and Mrs. Peter Peterson; Mr. and Mrs. Nils Tyrholm and children. Andrew J. A. Tyrholm and Mrs. P. O. (Elise) Sunde; Mr. and Mrs. H. F.

Gulbratson (Gilbertson) and children, Torwald, Hank. John G. Gilbertson and Anna; Mr. and Mrs. John Larson and children, Mrs. H. (Thora) Larson and Mrs. O. S. (Mary) Bakke; Mr. and Mrs. Ole H. Sunde and children, Jonas O. Sunde, Hans Jorgen, (H. J. Hanson), Mrs. E. E. (Sophia) Verplank, Mrs. George (Gretha) Jorgenson, John and P. O. (Paul) Sunde; Mr. and Mrs. Lars Hanson (Stordahl) and children, Mrs. Torger Hanson, Mrs. August Miller; Mr. and Mrs. Halvor K. Stearns; Mr. and Mrs. Knute H. Hagen; Mr. and Mrs. Nels Christianson; Mr. and Mrs. Knut Rukke Rotegard and two sons.

These early settlers were all born in Norway and immigrated to America. They became real Americans early. Proof of this came in 1861 when the Civil War was declared, sixteen young men from the settlement enlisted or were drafted seeing service with the Union Army on Southern battlefields. Most of them returned, but a few lie buried in Southern soil.

Oien, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ole K. Hagen, was the first white child born in New Richland township. Ole C. Knutson was the first male child born in the settlement.

At the first meeting of the County Commissioners on March 16, 1857, the three townships of New Richland, Byron, and Vivian and the south one third of Otisco township were thrown into one precinct and called Otisco, but on November 2, 1858, the Commissioners set off and organized Congressional township 108 North, Range 22 West into a civil township under the name of Norway, but that was afterwards changed to Richland. The "New" was added shortly thereafter. The first town meeting for the purpose of organizing the township was held on April 5, 1859, at the home of John Larson. The following officers were elected: John Thompson, chairman; J. S.

Rice and David Skinner, supervisors; S. W. Franklin, clerk; Anthony Sampson, assessor; Nels Christianson, collector; J. S. Rice and John Larson, justices of the peace; George W. Legg and Andrew Johnson, constables, and Ole Johnson, overseer of the poor.

NEW RICHLAND PLATTED

Before I venture to write the history of the village of New Richland, I want to reveal from what sources I have gathered my material. First, I want to thank the New Richland Star for letting me use a copy of the Star of September 9, 1927. This was the year New Richland celebrated its Golden Jubilee. I have also gathered facts from Child's History of Waseca County, from Steele and Waseca County History, The 85th Anniversary of Waseca County edition of the Waseca Herald in 1942 and from the History of the Norwegian settlers of the Le Sueur River Community when it celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1931. And many thanks to Dr. B. J. Gallagher, Harold Sunde, John Christianson and Oscar Martinson for their help.

All the first business men of the village have gone to their eternal rest, but many of their descendants are still active in the life of the community.

RAILROAD REACHED NEW RICHLAND IN 1877

The M. & St. L. Railroad was completed in 1877 from Albert Lea to Minneapolis. The village of New Richland on the South East quarter of Section 17, was laid out and platted by Henry T. Wells in August 1877. A depot was built in the fall of the same year. The first depot agent was E. Davis.

New Richland from its very start has always worked for a better and more progressive town. The citizens are justly proud of their fine res-

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New Richland, Minnesota

Organized 1898

Capital, Surplus and Undivided Profits \$350,000.00

George Hovig, President

Harold Sunde, Vice President

Earl Lange, Cashier

Harry A. Anderson, Asst. Cashier

Directors—O. B. Anderson
G. P. Madden

George Hovig
Harold Sunde

Earl Lange

idential district and for their well kept lawns and the curbed and black-topped streets.

As far as it is known the first building built in the new town was erected by a Mr. Buncho in July, 1877. He opened a saloon which he ran for eight months and then sold the building to James Murphy, who converted it into a residence and about a year later sold it to M. Murphy. He later sold it to Fred Laudert, who with his family resided in it for many years. His daughter, Mrs. Ella Hansen, resides in Waseca.

Thomas Lynch put up a building in the fall of 1877 which he rented. Mrs. M. P. Lofty conducted a millinery store in this building for many years. In the fall of the same year J. H. Wightman built a store building and put in a stock of hardware and ran it for eight years when he sold out to A. J. Newgard, who with his son, Carl, ran it for many years. After the retirement of Mr. Newgard his son became the sole owner. He later sold out to C. I. Virnig, who with his partner, Gene Dodge, conduct the hardware business at the same stand.

In the year 1877, C. H. Hooper put in a stock of drugs and medicine which he ran for a few years. Fred W. Johnson and Nils Tyrholm ran separate drug stores for many years. B. C. Rotegard worked for Mr. Johnson for several years. In 1918 the Johnson & Tyrholm drug stores consolidated. B. C. Rotegard bought out Tyrholm and Johnson in 1920, and conducted the store until November 1954, when on account of ill health

he sold out to the present owner, Herbert Richter. Mr. Rotegard passed away in January 1955. He was a grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Knut Rukke Rotegard, who settled in the LeSueur River Lutheran church community in 1856.

In 1880, Henry Jaehning purchased a building on the main street. He engaged in the furniture business and sale of undertaking goods. Mr. Jaehning at one time operated a creamery and it was he who built the first telephone line to St. Olaf Lake store. This was the first farm line built in Waseca county. Later Milo Hodgkins became interested and the New Richland Telephone Company was organized. At the time New Richland celebrated their Golden Jubilee in 1927 H. Richard Christianson was the manager.

In the fall of 1877 a store building was moved in from Wilton by Hugh Wilson. He rented to Mee Bros. from Faribault, who put in a stock of general merchandise. They continued the business for a short period when they closed out the stock. In the fall of 1878 H. K. Stearns purchased the building and put in a well assorted stock of general merchandise and commenced business on January 1, 1879. He operated this business for several years.

SOLD FIRST HARDWARE GOODS IN STREET

Johnson and Murphy firm was formed in the summer of 1877, before there was any building in New Richland or the railroad track had reached there. Anticipating the

wants of those about to settle in the future village they ordered a stock of hardware which they hauled from Waseca by team. Not having any building to set up store they opened shop on a lumber pile, weighing out nails in a basket on an old fashioned steelyard. When night had come they laid down by their stock to protect it from being stolen. Soon, however, they put up a building and from their small beginning they had the energy and ability to work up a fine trade. They also carried on a very excellent business in farm machinery, coal, wire, pumps etc. In the month of September, 1877, C. C. Brossard built a store building and put in a stock of general merchandise. He continued to operate the store for two years when he closed out the stock at a public sale. The building was sold to F. G. Schneider, who had come from Dodge county, Wisconsin. He opened a harness making shop in this building. In 1887 he formed a partnership with John Kreuzer. The firm name was F. G. Schneider and Co. They handled harnesses, boots and shoes and trunks etc. Later Mr. Kreuzer formed a partnership with his two sons, Joseph and Raymond, and they carried a full line of clothing and accessories. After Mr. Kreuzer retired Joseph and Raymond continued the business as Kreuzer brothers. Mr. Kreuzer passed away in 1931. Joseph was later appointed as Postmaster at New Richland and Raymond carried on the business. Joseph and Raymond are now deceased. John Kreuzer's other son, Titus, owns a farm in Byron town-

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ship and makes his home in Marshall, Minnesota, where he practices medicine.

In 1877, the firm of Clarke and Swann put up a building and stocked it with a fine assorted stock of drugs, medicine and fancy toilet articles. They ran this store for many years.

Nils Tyrholm and son, John A., put up a building in the fall of 1877 which they stocked with furniture. Later they also conducted an undertaking business. Nils Tyrholm was a cabinet maker by trade. Mr. Friedrich, who succeeded Harry T. Tyrholm in the furniture and undertaking business, in the fall of 1961 presented the Waseca county Historical Society with two children's coffins made by Mr. Tyrholm and one of these is among the thousands of articles which have been collected, carded and indexed and placed in the museum at Waseca.

Later the Tyrholms acquired a franchise with the Ford Motor Company to become a Ford dealer. That franchise was dated July 1, 1906, and at the present time there are only six dealers in the world that have been with the Ford Co. longer than the Tyrholm company as they rank seventh in length of time with the Ford company. A partnership was formed in 1905 by J. A. Tyrholm and A. N. Tyrholm and incorporated in 1910 as J. A. Tyrholm and Co., Inc. LeRoy Tyrholm carries on the Ford agency at Waseca under the name of Tyrholm and Sjoberg. In February of 1962 Mr. Tyrholm sold his interest to Mr. Sjoberg. The Tyrholms are all active in many ways in Waseca county and Owatonna. A. N. Tyrholm resides at Owatonna, Mrs. O. B. Anderson at New Richland, Mrs. H. F. Bestman, LeRoy and Arthur Tyrholm at Waseca and Walter Tyrholm at Brainerd, Minnesota.

NILS TYRHOLM FIRST OF FAMILY OF MERCHANTS

The following few paragraphs were supplied by Albert Tyrholm:

"The following is as told to me by my father: He was born in New

York City within a year after his parents arrived from Norway. The family spent a winter, 1854, in Wisconsin before migrating to Minnesota, settling on a farm in New Richland township, now known as the Verplank farm. This farm was homesteaded by his father, Nils Tyrholm. While homesteading the farm his father worked at least part of the time in the Hill Furniture factory at Faribault. On most week ends his father would travel via train from Faribault to Owatonna and then walk, when no other transportation was available, from Owatonna to the farm. He often would pull a small wagon or sled carrying provisions for the family.

"As soon as his father had proved up on the homestead he moved his family to Faribault. My father grew to manhood there and for a number of years worked with his father in the Hill Furniture factory. At the age of twenty-two he had two hundred dollars saved. He knew of the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad Co. building a railroad south out of Minneapolis and at that time had laid the tracks south through Waseca and approaching what is now the village of New Richland. This was about the year 1877. With his two hundred dollars father boarded the train from Faribault to Owatonna and was fortunate to receive a wagon ride from Owatonna to the Larson farm near New Richland. The next morning he walked to New Richland and picked out a lot on which to build a store building in which to conduct a furniture business. He made a payment of \$50 on the lot purchase, saved out \$50 for payment of building material and \$50 for building labor. There was much activity in the small village at that time and so with his last \$50 savings he purchased a dozen trunks from the M. Secor Co. of Milwaukee. When these trunks arrived he sold them immediately at a Dutchman's One per cent and promptly wired for two dozen more trunks which also sold readily. This was his start in business.

"Some years later he was instrumental in having his father move his family to New Richland and for many years, the father, Nils Tyrholm, manufactured much of the furniture and coffins sold in the store. Mr. Tyrholm was born on September 3, 1856, and passed away June 13, 1931."

FIRST POST OFFICE

In the fall of 1877 a building was erected by John Larson, who opened it by putting in a stock of general merchandise. In this store the Post Office was housed, Mr. Larson being the first postmaster. He continued in this building for about eight years when he erected a brick building on the west side of the street. The goods were moved into the new building. Later the business was turned over to his son, M. C. Larson, who carried on a general merchandise business for several years.

The old building formerly owned by John Larson was sold to M. A. Larson, a barber who put in a stock of general merchandise. He ran the barber shop in connection with the store.

The same fall, 1877, a building was put up by Fenton Keenan which he rented to W. Blake and Son, who put in a stock of ready-to-wear clothing. They ran the store for a short time when they moved the stock to Waseca. Later Peterson and Peterson ran a general merchandise store here and also had the Post Office. About the year of 1881 the Peterson Brothers built a brick building in which they opened up a saloon. Later Peter Peterson bought full control of the building and ran a saloon in it for many years.

I. Sorenson, in the early 80's, put up a building and put in a stock of groceries and crockery and ran the store for a short time finally closing out. The village afterwards purchased the building and used it for an engine house for the fire department. In the later part of 1877 Joseph Smith also put up a building and opened a store of dry goods,

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THE NEW RICHLAND STAR

Covering the Tri-County Area

E. H. Engesser,
Editor and Publisher

Margaret A. Engesser,
Business Manager

Phone 465-8112

clothing and groceries and continued business for seven years when he moved the stock to Red Lake Falls, Minnesota. This building became the property of Johnson and Sunde and there will be more about that firm later

In 1877, E. E. Ellifson put up a building in which he carried on a tailoring business for six years. He was the first tailor in New Richland. This building was sold to Emma Bettner who carried on a harness making business for several years. The mechanical work being under the management of her father, Fred Bettner.

About the year 1875, I. Torgerson and Co. opened a general merchandise store in Section 1, New Richland township. This firm continued business for about sixteen months when C. B. Johnson purchased the interest of one of the partners and the business was carried on until the starting of New Richland village by the firm name of Torgerson and Johnson. In October 1877 they moved the building and stock to New Richland village. In the spring of 1878 Mr. Torgerson sold his interest to Paul O. Sunde and the firm name changed to Johnson and Sunde. They carried on the business as partners for several years. In the year 1881 the business enlarged and moved into a new building which is known as the A. Byersdorf building. In 1885, Johnson and Sunde Co. bought out Joseph Smith Co. and moved into the store building.

P. O. SUNDE FOUNDED DEPARTMENT STORE

In August 1885, Sunde and Johnson dissolved partnership. Mr. Sunde continued the business under the name of P. O. Sunde Company. The business continued to expand until 1895 when he moved his store building into the next block and built a large modern department store. It had always been the ambition of Mr. Sunde to own and operate a modern department store and just as he attained that ambition his health broke down and he was unable to continue it long. For many years Mr. Sunde had opened the store at 7 a.m. and locked up at 11 p.m. The long hours of hard labor and responsibility broke the health of many business men in those days. Mr. Sunde was a public spirited man and an ardent church worker. He served as recorder and Mayor of the village at different times and he served as town clerk of New Richland township for seven years. On February 26, 1880, he was united in marriage to Lizzie C. Tyrholm, sister of J. A. Tyrholm.

In 1911, Mr. Sunde sold his business to his son, Harry. In 1914, Harry sold a half interest to his brother-in-law, J. W. Romine, and the name was changed to Sunde-Romine Company. They disposed of the business to Mr. Prigge. In 1938 it changed hands again to M. N. Johnson and Ethan Allen, the firm name was M. N. Johnson Co. In 1940, Mr. Allen bought out Mr. Johnson's interest and the firm name was changed to Allen Mercantile Co.

In 1948, Mr. Allen disposed of the grocery department, but conducted the dry goods store until 1956 when he closed out the stock. The New Richland State Bank needed more room and they remodeled the building to make one of the most up to date banks in southern Minnesota.

Harry Sunde and his sister, Mrs. J. W. Romine, still reside in New Richland and still take a deep interest in the social and business life of the village. Mrs. Romine's daughter, Jean, married William Horn and in 1959, they built the first bowling alley in New Richland, which they now operate and do a good business in this healthy sport.

C. B. Johnson, who was in partnership with P. O. Sunde, severed this connection in 1885. Mr. Johnson entered partnership with J. A. Tyrholm, the firm handling clothing, furniture and farm machinery. Mr. Johnson was in charge of the clothing department. In 1897, Mr. Johnson bought out H. K. Stearns and opened an exclusive clothing store. In 1900, he erected a fine new building. Soon after his sons grew up into the business and 1912 Mr. Johnson retired from active business turning it over to his two sons, Olaf and George. Mr. Johnson and the two sons, have since passed away.

In October, 1877, a lumber yard was opened by Randall, Botter and Co., A. J. Newgard being "the Company" and he became the manager. Six months later the interests of Randall and Botter were purchased by Charles Ziegler. The name then

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Waseca, Minnesota

NELSON'S BAKERY

V. C. Nelson, Owner

New Richland, Minnesota

changed to Newgard and Ziegler. They continued in business for 16 months when Mr. Ziegler died. Four months after the death of Mr. Ziegler, Mr. Newgard purchased his interest from his heirs. Mr. Newgard ran the business alone until he associated himself with C. A. Wagner. Two years later he sold his interest, including all real estate in that vicinity to Mr. Wagner and his brother Christopher, who formed the firm of Wagner Brothers and conducted this business for many years.

Also in late 1877, a lumber yard was started by Isaac Lincoln & Co., who continued the business about six months when they sold out to A. J. Stensvad. Eighteen months later he sold out to C. D. Haven & Co., who ran it until it consolidated with the yard and business of A. J. Newgard as already related.

TWO BLACKSMITH SHOPS

On July 5, 1877, O. P. Olson, started a blacksmith shop on the farm of Peter Echternach in New Richland township and continued at that place until the village was laid out in the fall, when he removed to there and became the first smithy in the village. He ran this shop for five years when he sold it to John Kreuzer. Olson then moved to Preston, Minnesota, but three years afterward returned to New Richland and purchased his old stand where he had done business for so many years. T. Thompson started the second blacksmith shop in the village in the fall of 1877.

At the time the village was platted in 1877 P. A. Holt started a wagon shop and continued in that business until 1884 when he closed out all the material and formed a partnership with others under the firm name of Holt, Anderson and Co. They opened a lumber yard. They added to their business a sash and door factory. Anderson sold his interest to G. N. Huseby, who in about a year sold his interest to his partners so the name was changed to

P. A. Holt and Co. They did quite an extensive business in manufacturing sash, doors, blinds and the "Favorite Washing Machine."

JEWELRY STORES

The Pioneer Jewelry establishment was opened in the fall of 1877 by O. A. Tiffany & Bro., who did all kinds of repairing in that line in connection with a general store they had. A jewelry store was started in May, 1889, by A. S. Boice.

In connection with the jewelry business I must not forget to mention Emil Schwenke. He started to learn the watchmaking trade in Waseca in 1892. In 1894 he graduated from the Winona school for watchmakers and opened business in New Richland on July 10, 1894. He continued in business about 40 years. Anyone who loves baseball will cherish his memory. He spent plenty of time and money in managing many New Richland baseball teams. I think his biggest ambition in the sport was to beat Waseca and he and his teams succeeded many times. He was a strong advocate in organizing the first Southern Minnesota baseball league in 1922.

MANY MEN RAN HOTELS

Three hotels were built in 1877. The Washburn House was built by N. J. Robbins. This hotel changed hands several times. J. O. Culver, Alex Brisbane, Thomas Rice, O. H. Bronson, Frank Hunt and others owned it. It stood across from Virnig's hardware. Oscar Martinson has his office in the building.

The Commercial House was built by Ole Johnson Moe, who ran it for a few years and then sold it to F. B. Hanke. Later he sold to Christian Hanson.

The third hotel built in 1877 was known as the American House, built by Charles Brownell, who rented it to Goldsmith and Johnson. Later it was sold to Mrs. Gibson, who converted it into a residence.

Later the Kelly and Lynch hotels

ran for some time but at present there is no hotel in New Richland.

In 1886 Henry Jaehning started a cheese factory and did a nice business until he quit. As far as I can find that was the first cheese factory that operated in Waseca county.

The first farm implement business was started in the spring of 1878 by A. H. Laughlin and C. K. Palmer. They ran this for five years when they dissolved the business in New Richland and moved to Lisbon, N. D.

M. C. Larson in 1885 started a hay press which was run by horse power. He could bale about ten tons a day. In the peak of the season he employed ten men. In the following year A. J. Stensvad started a steam hay press. He also turned out ten tons a day and employed ten men.

Benjamin F. Weed was the principal dealer in wood for fuel in the village. He continued this business for some time. He moved to New Richland in 1884. In 1861, he had enlisted in Company F, Fiftieth Minnesota Infantry and was mustered into the service January 24, 1862. He served three years and four months and saw active duty in more than twenty engagements.

B. H. Schlosser came to the village in 1884 and was at New Richland for many years.

Edward Steinhaus came to Waseca county in 1880. He was engaged in the carpenter trade for two years. In 1883, he opened a restaurant in New Richland which he operated several years.

MEAT MARKETS

In 1878, Mr. Nitschke, father of Al and Carl started the first butcher shop in New Richland. Anyone that did not know Carl and Alfred missed knowing two of the most human men I have ever met. I will never forget when Harold Frentz and a couple of local men carried out the cash register in their absence. When they came back to the shop they discovered the cash register missing but all they said was "well who

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Waseca County Treasurer

Waseca, Minnesota

GAY'S STEP COMPANY

Manufacturers of

PRECAST STEPS

OUTSIDE FIREPLACES

ORNAMENTAL IRON RAILINGS

INCINERATORS

New Richland, Minnesota

Office Phone 465-3222

Residence Phone 465-8025

Gerhard Strenge, Proprietor

ever took it we hope had a good time." The culprits brought it back and Alfred and Carl got even with them many times thereafter. They conducted the store for over 60 years and have since passed away.

Martin Laudert started the second meat market in New Richland in 1880, which he operated for two years when he was elected village marshall.

C. E. Christianson ran a dray line in New Richland for many years.

George Stearns owned and operated a bus line in New Richland in 1887, and his advertisement read, "Baggage delivered to and from the depot for five cents."

PRESENT DAY MERCHANTS

The Abraham general store is now the oldest general store in the village. It was started by A. Abraham in 1924. It has been conducted as a family store since the death of Mr. Abraham in 1960. His sons and daughters still carry on a well stocked and up-to-date store.

Other progressive merchants are prominent in New Richland, namely the V. C. Nelson bakery; The Sweet shop; Shurson Bros., trucking; Russell Peterson, Fairway store; Kalke Cement and Tile Co.; Ralph Borchard, machinery and filling station; Fred Jensen's hatchery; Ole Cafe, owned by Alvin Minske, one of the best operated cafes in southern Minnesota; Boie Implement Co.; Bruzek Hardware; Friedrich Furniture; Lloyd Peterson Electric Co.; and two lumber yards.

FLOUR MILLING

The Model Roller Mill was built in 1877 at a cost of \$40,000 by E. E. Dunwoody and H. H. Corson. The building was 60 by 40 feet, three stories high and had a basement and engine and boiler room. The size of these was 30 by 60 feet. In addition to the main building there were several other buildings, a store house 28 by 48 by two stories high, a bag house 12 by 18 feet cooper house 30 by 50 feet, elevator 40 by 40 feet, warehouse 40 by 60 feet, barrel house 24 by 28 feet and a stock house 16 by 24 feet. In the second year it ran day and night producing 300 barrels of the finest flour made. They shipped at an average of two carloads a day. They had a capacity of 60,000 bushels of wheat. The mill continued in business for several years. Later it was sold to Everett-Aughenbaugh & Co. of Waseca and they operated it until 1925 when they sold the mills at Waseca and New Richland to the Russell Miller Milling Co. of Minneapolis. They disposed of the machinery, but continued to keep a stock of flour and feed for several years. The building was completely torn down in the summer of 1961.

In 1882, the same two gentlemen that owned the first roller mill, Dunwoody and Corson bought 880 acres of land just south of the village and the history of New Richland would not be complete without some references to the noted stock farm they established. This farm was one of the important factors in the devel-

opment of the township. The farm was comparatively wild prairie land. It embraced the south half of section 20, the north half of section 29, the west half of the southwest quarter of section 29, and the north-west quarter of section 32. They stocked the farm with purebred Holstein cattle. The farm is now split into six farms.

Shortly after J. A. Tyrholm started in business he also took on a line of machinery. Christ and John A. Christianson were employed by Mr. Tyrholm. John was a licensed embalmer and was in charge of the undertaking business. Later Christ and John purchased the machine stock and ran the business under the firm name of Christianson Brothers. This was located on the west end of the block of Bruzek's hardware store. After they discontinued business John went to work for Virnig hardware store and although at the age of 85 he still works half days. His brother, Christ, passed away this summer, 1961.

GROCERY PRICES IN 1890

F. T. Kingsley opened a grocery store and lunch room in 1890. I think you all will get a chuckle from his first ad in the New Richland Star:

3 lbs. good tea \$1.00.

3 lbs. J. T. tobacco, \$1.00.

6 lbs. good smoking tobacco, \$1.00.

Mr. Kingsley passed away some years ago. His son, Howard, now deceased was a rural mail carrier at both New Richland and Waseca.

Friedrich Furniture Co.

Everything in the Line of Furniture
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New Richland, Minnesota

Phone 645-8015

Peterson's Fairway Foods

Phone

465-8118

New Richland, Minnesota

E. O. Gardson started business in New Richland before the railroad was completed to New Richland. Here are the exact words that appeared in the New Richland Star Golden Jubilee edition published in 1927 when New Richland celebrated the 50th year of the founding of the village. "I walked from Waseca to New Richland and set up business here. I have been right here in business every day since. Myself and son have grown up with the town of New Richland from its beginning and we are proud to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. Signed E. O. Gardson and Son." That firm is no longer in business.

H. A. Anderson and Sons conducted a general merchandise store in what is now called the Byersdorf building for many years. Mr. Anderson was a most public spirited citizen and an ardent baseball fan. His sons, Oscar (O. B.) and Helmer (Spike) played on the New Richland team for many years.

ANDERSONS SHIPPED CARLOADS OF LIVESTOCK

In 1885, Mr. Anderson started in the livestock business. In the first few years he bought livestock for about \$3000 annually. His son, O. B. Anderson and Sons succeeded him and the business grew by leaps and bounds, for instance, take the year 1926, when Mr. Anderson shipped 615 carloads of livestock and paid the farmers \$850,000. He continued this business for several years, finally discontinuing. His son, Russel passed away a few years ago. His son, Harry, is assistant cashier at the New Richland State Bank. O. B., who is 79 years of age, is busier than ever. He gets up at six every morning. He is kept busy supervising his large holdings of real estate. At present he owns some 15 farms in Steele and Waseca counties. His brother, Helmer, resides at Otisco.

Some of the old timers might remember when H. A. Anderson had a picture taken driving a team of

oxen at the county fair in 1908, with a representative group of New Richland Pioneers. Mr. Anderson passed away in 1909.

NEW RICHLAND STATE AND FIRST NATIONAL BANKS ORGANIZED

The New Richland State Bank is still operating with some descendants of the first board of directors on the present board. This bank was organized in 1896. Before the bank was started Dunwoody and Corson conducted a small bank at their mill office. This was not considered a full fledged bank, but they were able to cash checks and make change and handle small money matters. The first officers of the State Bank were Christopher Wagner, president; P. O. Sunde, vice-president; Henry E. Johnson, cashier. The first directors were Christ Wagner, P. O. Sunde, C. B. Johnson, D. D. Smith, Nels Johnson, John L. Hanson and B. G. Sutlief. The present officers are George Hovig, president; Harry Sunde, vice-president; O. B. Anderson, G. P. Madden, directors; Earl Lange, cashier, and Harry Anderson, assistant cashier.

In the 1920's the First National Bank was started and they built a fine building across from the present site of the State Bank, in which they carried on a general banking business until 1933 when it discontinued banking and sold the building to the village of New Richland which has operated the municipal liquor store in the building since that time.

PRODUCE CO. OPERATED ON LARGE SCALE

The New Richland Star of December 13, 1935, carried a front page story and photograph of J. W. Romine manager of the New Richland Produce Co. Mr. Romine came to New Richland in 1905 as a depot agent for the M. & St. L. Railroad. In 1914, he associated himself with his brother-in-law, Harry Sunde. They operated the Sunde & Romine

department store and the New Richland Produce Co. for many years. They later discontinued the store business as mentioned in the story of Mr. Sunde. The Produce Co. operated for many years when it was sold to Land O' Lakes. It was in 1919 when Mr. Romine realized that the village was considerably handicapped because no cash market for poultry and eggs was available to the farmers locally. The firm purchased the old school house which was dismantled in August and September this year. When the produce company first started they bought eggs and shipped live poultry. They then expanded and equipped the plant and started to kill and dress poultry. In 1924, they branched out some more and started a pickling and salting station. This was operated a few years. In 1936, they built the Full O' Pep hatchery with a capacity of 52,416 eggs. During the operation by Mr. Romine there were certain times of the year when they employed about one-sixth of the entire population of the village. Besides being a good business man he took great interest in the civic and welfare of the village. He served as Mayor for eleven terms. He passed away June 23, 1947. He was a very good friend of mine and I had a lot of respect for him.

HEMP PLANT ... AND MOBILE HOMES

During the second world war the government built a hemp plant about one mile northwest of the village. Many farmers raised several acres of hemp for a few years. Shortly after the war the plant was closed. At present it is being used by Sunline Mobile Homes, who employs about 25 men.

Wenzel Bruzek started a hardware store in New Richland around the year of 1899. He conducted this store for sometime when he sold the stock to J. A. Tyrholm Co. Mr. Bruzek worked for Tyrholm as a tinsmith. Later they moved the stock into the building now occupied by the Fried-

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rich furniture store and J. A. Tyrholm started a garage until he purchased the Lynch Hotel building now owned by the Boie Implement business. After the Tyrholms moved, Mr. Bruzek went back in the hardware business and remained in this business until his death which occurred May 18, 1931. After his death, his sons, Edward and Lawrence, took over the business. About five years ago the partnership was severed. Edward opened a plumbing shop east of the State Bank. Lawrence still carries on the hardware business in the building located across the street from the village hall. Sophie, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wenzel Bruzek, married George Hovig, president of the State Bank.

At the council meeting of October 28, 1889, the council, by secret ballot, voted three to two to erect and equip a windmill over the south well.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The fire department was organized in 1885. At the annual meeting on April 16, 1885, the constitution and by-laws of Fire Engine Company No. 1 were approved and ratified. On motion the constitution and by-laws of Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 were approved. It was ordered that D. B. Sparks be confirmed as chief engineer of the fire department. On motion T. J. Rice was confirmed as assistant engineer. At the council meeting of May 4, 1885, Mr. Holt and Mr. Halgrimson were appointed a committee to rent a building

in which to keep the fire apparatus. On motion the council rented the first story of Mrs. Sorenson's building for \$3.00 a month.

In the fall of 1938, the farmers of the New Richland area organized for the purpose of purchasing a farm fire truck to be used in fighting farm fires, by the volunteer firemen of New Richland. The chief at that time was Henry G. Laudert. A board of seven was elected. They were as follows: O. S. Martinson, president; Ralph Borchard, secretary; Reuben Youngberg, treasurer; Martin Olson, George Dressell, August Bethke, V. C. Nelson.

After various meetings a plan was set up for the financing and purchase of a truck. It was agreed that a charge of \$7.50 be made for each membership. This would entitle a member to the service of the truck for the life of the truck. In case a farmer, after being contacted, should refuse to pay the \$7.50 to become a member, should he at any occasion have to call the truck he would be required to pay \$30.00 for each call.

A sufficient amount of money was raised (about \$2,000) and the truck, an International with Luverne fire equipment, was purchased. Incidentally about a week after the treasurer Reuben Youngberg issued a check for the final payment on the truck, a unique thing happened, in that the truck was called to (you guessed it) none other than the Reuben Youngberg farm. Actually and naturally, everyone suspected

that Reuben was just going to have the firemen make a demonstration run. Well, it was not. There was a very bad and stubborn fire in some straw in the second story of Reuben's hen house, which kept the firemen busy for several hours but was finally subdued. Incidentally the members of the Otisco Farm Mutual Insurance Company were at this fire, after being in a huddle discussing the saving that possibly was involved would amount to three or four times the cost of the equipment at this one fire. Within a period of one month our firemen with this new truck were called to two other serious fires: H. Hendrickson's and L. J. Sheldon's, where considerable saving was made; also preventing an unestimated amount of loss or damage to the farm property.

This truck arrangement went on about fifteen years after which time the firemen and farm board, then consisting of O. S. Martinson, president; Ray Dinneen, vice president; Reuben Youngberg, secretary; Elmer Scheffert, Wm. Olson, Richard Frisk, Carl Brecke, Lloyd Martinson and Carl Neihaus (the latter two representing the firemen) and the firemen felt that this old truck had served its purpose to the extent that it was outmoded and obsolete for the best service, so it was decided that new or improved equipment was necessary. After several meetings of former members, it was decided that a new outfit be bought and money be raised for this purpose. This money was to be raised in much the

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same manner as the first equipment only considerably more (about \$12,-000). To raise this amount, each former member was called on to pay \$25.00, any new member \$30.00 for calls. From any one not a member, a call for help in case of fire would require a \$100 payment. Leo Miller was appointed as chairman of the soliciting committees, who did a very fine job of raising the necessary money in the neighborhood of three weeks. The truck a Reo, with Bean equipment, was purchased and since has proven to do a wonderful job with the efficient help of the New Richland volunteer firemen. Later an auxiliary truck and water tank was purchased for emergency water supply. The housing of all this equipment is furnished by the village of New Richland. In return it has been agreed this farm equipment may be used in the village in case of emergency.

FARM FIRE TRUCK EFFICIENTLY HANDLED

In these trucks a file of cards is kept listing the name, location and route for the driver to take to each individual farm member.

The party (the unsung hero, so to speak) responsible for processing these cards, together with keeping these files up to date each spring, when so many farm owner and tenant changes are made is Mrs. Adlyn Nelson, who is to be commended for her efficient and faithful services all with very little compensation. The arrangements with the Fire Insurance Companies represented in our area has been unusually cooperative and agreeable.

All in all, this organization together with the New Richland volunteer firemen is to be commended for the sincere effort and purpose of saving life and property. Don Breilein was chief of the volunteer firemen at the time this equipment was being considered and with the cooperation of the firemen has done a very

commendable job of fast and efficient service.

At a meeting of the council held January 5, 1891, it was moved that the village attorney draft an ordinance prohibiting any train to go through the village at a greater speed than six miles per hour.

IRISH GOOD POLICEMEN FOR NEW RICHLAND

Mike Murphy, the first village marshal was appointed by the village council in 1878. He served for two years. Several men have served in that position since. One who served for twenty years was none other than Thomas Courtney. When he retired, the citizens held a celebration in his honor.

At the council meeting of January 8, 1901, the council appointed A. O. Martinson as chief of the fire department in which capacity he served for many years. Mr. Martinson was the father of Oscar and Lloyd, who are well established in the business of the village. Mr. Martinson served as chief of the fire department for 34 years. He died at the age of 92 on April 26, 1957.

WATERWORKS, ELECTRIC LIGHTS AND TOWN HALL

At the meeting of the village council of February 17, 1902, the following resolution was duly adopted: That the village of New Richland purchase and establish a system of waterworks for fire protection and public and domestic use in the said village and that the cost thereof should not exceed \$12,000, and be raised by issuing and negotiating bonds of the village for the said sum and that said proposition be submitted to the voters of said village at the ensuing annual election. Result of the bond election was 95 votes for, 35 votes against.

At the council meeting September 11, 1890, the council granted a franchise to A. O. Lea and C. T. John-

son to furnish electric light to any one that wished to pay for its use. At the meeting of November 8, 1899, a motion was made and carried that a contract be made with Lea and Johnson for a term of three years for street lighting. The Electric street lights were turned on for the first time on December 19, 1899.

At the Council meeting of May 2, 1896, the council voted to build a Town Hall on the village corner lot, 27 by 65 feet, two stories high. Later plans were drawn and the council called for bids. On June 12, 1896, the contract was awarded to H. C. Paine of Albert Lea for \$3,500. This building is still being used as a city hall and the fire truck is housed on the ground floor.

At the council meeting of June 1880, a committee of Mr. Sparks and Mr. Swan was appointed to procure prices for sinking wells and furnishing same with pumps, hose and other fixtures. At the October meeting the council authorized the committee to purchase two pumps and 400 feet of hose and necessary equipment for the two wells that had been ordered drilled.

SENIOR CITIZENS

The New Richland area has had several men and women who were in the proud ranks of Senior Citizens reaching the age of ninety years or more. Among those who have passed on were: Otto Bahr, died October 30, 1931, age 96; and O. A. Martinson long time business man and chief of the fire department, died April 26, 1957, age 92. Living residents of this territory in their nineties are: Mrs. Caroline Verplauk, born September 18, 1868; Mrs. Ole C. Hendrickson, born December 8, 1870; Mrs. Gust Burtness, born October 14, 1871; Miss Emma Streng, born February 26, 1872.

On July 9, 1947, Mr. and Mrs. Morris Holbrook had been married for 75 years. There is no record that any other couple in Waseca county has ever been married that

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many years. Their anniversary was observed at their home in New Richland on July 13. The Hon. Henry M. Gallagher of Waseca was present and made a few appropriate remarks suitable to the occasion. The couple was also honored by Governor Luther Youngdahl at the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Vista community on July 5, 1947.

New Richland Star, July 25, 1907, carried the following respecting the Adams triplets. The Star showed a picture of Dorothy, Joseph and Rossella Adams with the following remarks. Above the picture the reading read "New Richland's most celebrated babies" below the picture it stated that they were the only triplets born in Waseca county. They were the first set of mixed triplets born, but I know of at least one set, the Kenneth Anderson triplets, born in Waseca on April 8, 1951, named Thomas, Timothy and Terrence.

The first band in New Richland was organized in 1879, Fred Bettner, one of the organizers of the band listed the following men and the instruments they played: Fred Luff, leader and E flat cornet; Fred Bettner, B flat cornet; Martin Laudert, B flat cornet; Charles Ziegler, E flat cornet; C. A. Wagner, B flat tenor; Fred Laudert, Alto; P. O. Sunde, Alto; Fred Lugg Sr., Bass; and Morris Holbrook, Bass drum.

In 1887, Ben Weed organized a drum corps with the following members: B. F. Weed, fife; Frank Weed, bass drum; Eskie Weed, snare drum and Edward Weed, fife.

CREAMERIES OF NEW RICHLAND FLOURISHED IN THE EARLY DAYS

In 1909 a group of farmers met and organized the New Richland Creamery Association. They purchased the business of Alfred Jaehning, who for a few years had conducted a private owned creamery. The first officers were S. O. Shurson, president; Dick Swift, secretary; Paul Querna, William Verplank, Jake Disher, William Michaelis, Jake Echternach, directors. William Steinhau was employed as operator for a few years. Olaf Liane served as secretary for many years. The present officers are as follows: Harold Ackerman, president; Walter Demmer, vice president; Russel Swenson, secretary and treasurer. Lee Christenson, Walter Michaelis, Orlin Lewer, and Harold Rollenhagen, directors. Howard Lyons is the present operator.

The Star Creamery was established at St. Olaf Lake in 1895, with the following officers: E. C. Sybilrud, president; A. C. Hagen, vice-president; S. O. Sunde, treasurer, and A. A. Sampson, secretary. This creamery discontinued business several years ago. At one time there were 19 creameries in operation in Waseca county. At the present time there are only six as follows: the Plum Valley Creamery Association at Waldorf, the Alma City Cooperative Creamery Association, the Janesville Cooperative Creamery Association, the Waseca Creamery Association, the New Richland

Creamery and the Otisco Cooperative Creamery.

BORGEN LEGION POST FIRST IN COUNTY

Andrew Borgen Post No. 75 was organized at New Richland August 1919 to be the First American Legion Post organized in Waseca county. It has the distinction of being the 75th Post organized in Minnesota. Its name is in honor of Andrew Borgen, a New Richland veteran who lost his life in France and who is buried in grave 31, row 36, block H, Meuse Argonne American cemetery, Romagne, Montfaucon, France. The first officers of the Post were: J. W. Kreuzer, Commander; H. E. Sievert, Adjutant; and H. R. Christianson, finance officer. Present officers are: Amberg Toffe, Commander; Fred Berg, vice-commander; Lowell Korman, adjutant; Wendel Liane, chaplain; and Charles Dunette, secretary.

The Lincoln Post No. 26, Grand Army of the Republic, was organized in the fall of 1889, with the following officers: Chris Wagner, P.C.; B. F. Weed, S.V.C.; O. H. Sutlief, J.V.C.; Fenton Keenan, O D; E E Verplank, A; H. J. Hanson, VM; P A. Holt, O. G. I am sure some of us old timers remember some of these old soldiers who fought so gamely for their Union.

Stranger Refugee Lodge No. 74, Independent Order of Odd Fellows was instituted January 4, 1880, with the following charter members: C. G. Cheasebro, Henry Jaehning, F.

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G. Schneider, E. Steinhaus and William Luff. The first officers were: C. G. Cheesebro, N.G.; John Kreuzer, V.G.; O. S. Bakke, S.; F. G. Schneider, T; C. A. Wagner, RS NG.; Archie Johnson, W.; O. H. Bronson, C.; Morris Holbrook, I.G.; L. F. Meigs, R.S.V.G, and John McGary, LS.V.G.

The order built a brick building the lower floor of which is rented to the Abraham General Store and the second floor is reserved for a Lodge room. Present officers are: Clarence Walstrom, N.G.; Earl Lange, treasurer, and Leo Echert, secretary. Trustees are Carl Christenson, Wendell Liane and Oscar Martinson. Joel Breck is V.G.

The Rebekah Lodge No. 74 received its charter on January 21, 1898.

I want to mention three men who resided close to the village and were held in great regard by all. They were T. K. Sommerstad, S. O. Shurson and A. A. Sampson.

The New Richland Elevator Co. was organized in the summer of 1907. They conducted the elevator for many years. They sold out to the present owner, the Hunting Elevator Company, who have enlarged their plant and today they have one of the finest grain elevators, feed mixing and grinding plants. Cal Calhoun is the local manager.

At the village council meeting held June 4, 1909, a request was presented by several ladies for the privilege of planting flowers in the park. The request was granted and the council promised protection of the flowers.

ST. OLAF LAKE PARK ASSOCIATION

In 1923, the St. Olaf Lake Park Association was organized. The first act of the officers was the purchase of five acres of land on the north shore of St. Olaf Lake from Hans Sunde. The first president of the association was the late Frank Johnson. Oscar Martinson was elected as secretary. Mr. Martinson served the association as secretary and president for 37 years. This organization

has and is doing a good job in maintaining the park on the shore of beautiful St. Olaf Lake. Nine directors serve on the board. Present officers are: Joseph Solberg, president; Eugene Worke, secretary; and Vernon Nelson, treasurer.

Eight men from New Richland township and village have served on the board of County Commissioners for the first district. They are as follows: H. K. Stearns, H. J. Hanson, Jonas Sunde, N. M. Nelson, C. Alfred Peterson, Frank Johnson, A. F. Sponberg and Roy Arnfelt. They are all deceased. Jule Boettger, the present commissioner, resides in Byron township.

CHURCHES

The first church erected in the village was by the Congregational denomination in the fall of 1882. It was erected at a cost of \$1,500. The first meeting of the society was held in the waiting room of the depot, Reverend Wilber Fish officiating. Reverend Fish continued to hold services for some time and it was due to his labors that the society was organized. Many meetings were held in empty store buildings until the church was completed. The present Pastor is Reverend Heinz Schwarz.

The Norwegian Lutheran church, now called the Trinity Lutheran church, was created in the summer of 1883. It was erected at a cost of \$2,500. The first meeting of this society was held in H. Larson's hall in the fall of 1877, Reverend O. A. Mellby presiding. He continued to preach in the mother church, Le Sueur River, and the New Richland church for many years. The present pastor is Lowell H. Smestad.

Two more churches were organized and have been very active since. They are All Saints Catholic church, Father Raymond Krebsbach, pastor, and the St. Peter Lutheran church, William F. Lehmann, pastor.

Tragedy hit New Richland and vicinity a hard blow on June 12, 1921. This happened at a high school

picnic held at the Park at St. Olaf Lake when six of the students went boat riding. Four of the six drowned. They were Florence, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Rasmussen; Herman, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Sponberg; Kennetta, daughter of Mrs. Gena Knutson, and Raymond, son of Mr. and Mrs. Otto Martin. The two rescued were Ethel Bjorklund, now Mrs. A. C. Sunde of Minneapolis (Mr. Sunde is a brother of Harold Sunde), and Ethel Evenson, now Mrs. Robert Kurkowski of Waseca. She is employed at the E. F. Johnson Co. at Waseca. These girls owe their lives to the late Martin Gorgen who at the time the boat capsized was fishing from the shore. He ran to the St. Olaf Lake store and got a key for a boat and rowed out and was able to rescue the two girls.

The first village attorney was F. B. Andrews. Other men who have served in that capacity are B. F. McGregor, Charles Spillane, John Spillane, Einer Iversen and Franklin M. Stone. The present village attorney is William B. Patton, who resides in Waseca.

LOCAL OPTION

New Richland voted on local option for the first time in 1911 and the vote was dry 75, wet 72. It voted again in 1912 and the vote stood dry 89, wet 75. I can't find the outcome of the 1913 election but it remained dry. It was again up for vote in 1914 and the results were as follow. For license 87, against license 87, so it remained dry. Another vote on the question was held in 1915 with the result for license 90, against license 90. Local option at the election of March 14, 1916, resulted as follows, for license 92, against license 102 and another vote for the same issue taken in the March election of 1917 resulted for license 85, against license 102.

The question of reincorporation of the village of New Richland under the provision of Chapter 9 of the General Statutes of Minnesota of

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1913, was submitted to the voters of the village at the annual election held March 9, 1920, and it was approved by a vote of 57 to 1.

D. B. Sparks, father of Mrs. Frank T. Gallagher, who resides in Waseca, came to New Richland in the fall of 1877. He had learned the carpenter trade and commenced business in New Richland as a millwright, putting in the machinery in the elevator and mill for Dunwoody and Corson and remained with that firm for three years and then started business for himself. In 1883, he was elected justice of the peace and filled that office for many years. He also sold farm machinery in addition to insurance. He also handled collections and once served as postmaster.

In the 20's and 30's a garage known as the Breilein Garage was doing business in the building where Gay Strenge operates a unique factory, manufacturing and selling cement steps for homes. The firm name is Gay's Step Co.

POSTMASTERS

The New Richland post office is eight years older than the village. It was established in 1870 on a farm two miles east of the present village site, because that farm was on the stage coach route. John Larson was the first postmaster serving from July 15, 1870, until June 5, 1886. Nichols Peterson held the office from 1886 until 1890. Orville H. Bronson from 1890 to 1893, D. B. Sparks from 1893 to 1897, Orville H.

Bronson from 1897 to 1903, Claus O. Sunde from 1903 to 1906, Anton O. Lea from 1906 to 1915, Andrew Rote-gard from 1915 to 1923, Walter E. Johnson 1923 to 1933, Joseph Kreuzer took over the office November 21, 1933, and held office until he passed away December 16, 1957. George Clunis was appointed in the fall of 1958 and is the postmaster at present.

MAYORS

Presidents of the village council since incorporation in 1878 to date are: Dr. B. M. J. Conlin, 1878; Wm. Smith Jr., 1879; P. O. Sunde, 1880, 1881; E. E. Dunwoody, 1882; J. R. Swan, 1884, 1885; C. A. Wagner, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889; F. G. Schneider 1890; C. A. Wagner 1893, 1894, 1895; Henry Jaehning 1896, 1897; A. O. Lee, 1904; E. R. Wightman, 1905; Alfred Joehning, 1906, 1907, 1908; J. A. Tyrholm, 1909, 1910; F. H. Krueger 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914; Lars Grove 1915, 1916; F. H. Krueger, 1917 to 1925, (during the two different terms Mr. Krueger served 13 years and longer than any one else; C. I. Vir-nig, 1926, 27, 28; A. G. Byersdorf, 1929, 30, 31, and J. W. Romine 1932 to 1942. Fred Jensen followed J. W. Romine, next in line was Walter Stavenau. The present mayor is Dr. Glen Nelson. J. W. Romine served continuously as mayor for 11 years, the longest period any mayor served continuously.

Present officers of the village of New Richland are: Clerk, Gehard Strenge; Treasurer, George Hovig;

Assessor, Frank Dunnette; Mayor, Leo Echart; Trustees, Russell Peterson, Harry Lillesve, Vernon Nelson and Howard Friederich.

NEWSPAPERS

R. P. Child made the first venture in newspaper work at New Richland in the fall of 1878. This paper existed for six months. September 24, 1884, Morse and Murphy of the Waseca Herald commenced publication of a paper called the New Richland Review. This like the first was a losing venture and was discontinued October 7, 1885. The next try was the North Star. The first issue was dated February 4, 1886. S. K. Gregg and M. E. Goodwin published this. They continued the paper until August 1887 when Bronson and Holland bought the paper. Their first paper was dated September 5, 1887. In the nineties the paper was sold to B. W. Graham, nephew of C. E. Graham, "on time." After a year Mr. Bronson again took charge of the office continuing publishing the Star until June 15, 1903, when he sold the whole plant to C. W. Brown who ran the paper for several years before he sold it to his son, D. C. Brown and Herbert Seivert. They conducted the paper until 1924 when Mr. Brown went to Waseca. He later was associated with the late W. A. Clement. Seivert and Brown sold the Star to V. C. Wall who later disposed of it to Rulif M. Martin. At the time New Richland celebrated its Golden Jubilee on September 15 and 16, 1927, Martin published a forty-page edi-

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tion with many pages of advertisement and many historical items. He always referred to Waseca as the "Silent City."

Mr. Martin later sold the paper to Vinton Bird who ran it for a few years when he sold it to C. W. Brown, a former owner. In 1955, he disposed of the paper to the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. E. H. and M. A. Engesser, who edit a neat and newsie paper. Many years ago the name North Star was changed to the New Richland Star. C. W. Brown observed his 87th birthday on September 28, 1961. He makes his home with his daughter, Mrs. G. E. Bell, at Berrien Springs, Michigan.

DOCTORS

With the help of Dr. B. J. Gallagher who has compiled a history of all the Doctors who have practiced in Waseca county, I list the Doctors of New Richland:

Dr. B. M. J. Conlin who became New Richland's first Mayor on March 15, 1878, is also thought to be the first Doctor. He practiced for about 3 years. According to a story told by the late Ed Weed in the issue of the Star September 9, 1927, a Doctor Palmer was in New Richland before the first train came through. This is Weed's story in brief. It happened the day before the first train came through. The only house in New Richland sat on the site of the present school house and Dr. Palmer had his sign out in the yard. Ed and Frank Weed, George Stearns and Tom Carmody had been hunting birds and they came through the newly platted town. They noticed the Doctor's sign and shot it full of holes. They were recognized by the maid and later the Sheriff arrested Frank Weed and he paid a fine. Dr. John Nutting practiced medicine for a short time in New Richland in the late nineties. Dr. L. D. Pierce is known to have been practicing in New Richland in the early 1880's. Dr. Frank Winstone Greene came to New Richland in 1894 and practiced there until 1904.

Dr. Greene lived in the house where Dr. Olds present office is located. Dr. Clinton T. Cook came to New Richland in 1893 and remained two years. He served as a member of the Board of Health of the village of New Richland in 1894. Dr. William A. Lang came to New Richland in 1891. There is no record as to how long he practiced here but in Child's History of Waseca County for the year 1886 it stated that Dr. W. A. Lang was appointed County Physician for the fourth district. Dr. J. A. Reynolds located in New Richland in 1901. He said he was from the State of Virginia and it is thought he returned there after leaving New Richland. Dr. Delos Dewitt Smith came to New Richland in 1890 and practiced there for ten years. Dr. Edwin J. Batchelder (whom I remember very well as he treated me for inflammatory rheumatism several times) started practicing at New Richland in the fall of 1895 and remained until 1918 when he moved to Minneapolis. After a short illness he passed away September 3, 1931. Dr. Batchelder was elected County Coroner in 1898 and he served as President of the Waseca County Medical Society several times. He was so well thought of by everyone in New Richland that more than 18 years after his death a memorial service was held for him in the high school auditorium.

On December 29, 1938, a beautiful bronze memorial plaque bearing a portrait of the Doctor and a suitable inscription was presented to the school by the citizens of the community.

Dr. H. O. Hagen, a native son, started practicing here. On February 13, 1904, he came here and practiced here many years. Dr. B. A. Leopard came to New Richland in 1923 and practiced for several years when he removed to Albert Lea. He was followed by Dr. William C. Bernstein who came to New Richland in July, 1928. He is now practicing in St. Paul. Dr. Russell Spittler started practice here in 1937 and remained until 1942. Dr. Spittler is now practicing at Lodi, California,

his address being 215 North Orange Avenue, Lodi, Calif. Dr. George H. Olds has been practicing in New Richland since 1945. He has a very large practice and is also serving as a member of the New Richland board of education.

MISCELLANEOUS

In 1886, we had never heard of building permits but if New Richland had had that policy then, it would have shown that 24 building permits were issued that year. It went down in history as a building boom.

September 15 and 16, 1927 go down in the history of New Richland as two of the most educational and highly publicized days it has known as New Richland observed its Golden Jubilee. "Dairy Days" which were first observed in the 1920's saw its sixth annual celebration. On the program were listed some of the most prominent men of Minnesota. It listed the speakers as follows: Senator Henrik Shipstead, L. R. (Larry Ho) Hodgson, W. H. Bremner of the M. St. L. Railroad Co., and Reverend Gustav Stearns, native son, still active in the ministry. The attraction I was most interested in was the Historical Museum. I think it had a lot to do to get me interested in supporting Mr. Panzram in organizing the Waseca County Historical Society and Museum.

On display on the street was the old original engine, first to pull a train through New Richland, with full steam up. In that connection I want to mention F. G. Schneider, who started the first harness shop. He served as Mayor. He was charter member of the Odd Fellows and though retired from active work he was present at the Golden Jubilee in 1927. Mr. Schneider who was living in Wisconsin in 1877, heard that a new town was platted in Minnesota so he took the North Western train to Waseca and boarded the first train into New Richland. He used to tell the story that he with another young man rode in a box

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car that was loaded with lumber. He used to say that the engineer was drunk and jerked the train so the lumber started to fall down on the two men. When the train reached Otisco they got out of the box car and rode the blind the rest of the way. It was cold and snowing and the young men were glad when this journey ended in New Richland.

BLAKESLEE & STEARNS RAILROAD SHOW

The story of the Frank Blakeslee and George Stearns combined railroad show is a long one. I am taking part of the write up of it in the New Richland Star and some facts I received from J. A. Christianson, who is still very alert at the age of 84. Here is the abbreviated story of one of the most interesting business ventures ever launched in New Richland. "Some time during the winter of 1893-1894 Frank Blakeslee, a grain buyer and all around speculator, together with George Stearns, who had been in the hardware business at New Richland, concocted the idea of starting a gigantic railroad show. In the winter of 1894 every seamstress was busy making gowns, costumes and uniforms for the forthcoming spectacle. The Star of March 1, 1894, said that the venture was well under way. Contracts had been made for nearly all the people. The big tent was made in Chicago at a cost of \$3,000. Other tents were ordered. The main tent was 277 feet long; horse tent 90 feet, round; side show tent 50 x 80 feet; ladies'

dressing tent 20 feet, round; and one for the men's dressing room of the same size. There would be twelve sleeping tents 12 x 14 besides cook and mess tents. The company claimed that including all the tents they would have the largest spread of canvas on the road. The company had decided that the show would travel on the railroad. The following cars were ordered. Three 60 foot flat cars, three 50 foot stock cars, one baggage car and two sleeping cars. These were to be hauled by a special engine. Two bill cars were to be used. One out one week in advance of the show, the other two weeks in advance.

NIGHT PERFORMANCE WAS RAINED OUT

Much more could be written about the attractions and I expect that with great curiosity and excitement the big day arrived. This was May 17, 1894. The afternoon show drew a crowd of 1,500. Many more decided that they would take in the evening performance but to the disappointment of the company and many of the citizens it was rained out. Several well known names of men who were engaged with the Company were Morris Holbrook, Christ and John Christianson, two of the Nitschke boys, and Henry Johnson was in charge of tickets. He is still living and resides in Minneapolis. John Christianson still resides in New Richland and he can tell you a long tale about this venture.

After showing in New Richland

they showed in the following towns: Albert Lea, Waseca, Mankato, Waterville, Red Wing and Minneapolis, where they showed for three weeks and then folded up. The crew demanded their money and they cut the admission price down to 15 cents. The equipment and horses were brought back to New Richland and they disposed of everything they could. A man by the name of Williams purchased most of the horses and organized a show called Worlds Fair and Wild West Show which did not run as long as the Blakeslee-Stearns show.

SCHOOLS DEVELOPED TO HIGHEST RANK

In writing the history of the New Richland school I will go back to the year of 1877. The first school was held in the Larson Hall. This was a four months' term. The first teacher was Miss Marian Dunbar. Her salary was twenty-five dollars per month. In the summer of 1878, the first school house was erected at a cost of \$1,200. It was located on a lot corner ways across from Borchard's Service station. In 1886, the building was moved to the present site of the school and an addition made to it. The school that year was not opened until the first week in November. John Songard was principal, Miss Merrill and Miss Kate Kelly, assistants. In 1887, there was talk of erecting a high school. The first high school building was built in 1900 at a cost of \$15,000. The old building was moved and

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later became the property of Sunde and Romine and was used for a poultry house. The story of the New Richland school is so long I will mention just the most interesting facts of its growth.

The high school was started in 1897 and the first high school graduating class was held on June 3, 1901, with a class of five. When the school opened in September 1901, it was the first time in the history of the New Richland school system they had an accredited State high schools. Commencement exercises were held on May 31, 1902. There were three graduates that year. They were Albert Tyrholm, Harry Sunde and Olivia Midgarden. Albert and Harry are still living. A very attractive building was added in 1916 at the cost of \$40,000. On April 5, 1927, at a special election the district voted the authorization of bonds, the money to be used to build a gymnasium which was built in 1927. New Richland won the first district basketball championship in 1938. The New Richland high school

band won the state championship on May 5, 1932, at Minneapolis. The present superintendent G. T. Norswing, took over as head of the New Richland schools in the fall of 1938 and since he took over the school has grown by leaps and bounds. In 1952, New Richland consolidated with many rural districts and the village of Hartland. The following districts consolidated: 23, 31, 42, 42, 54, 69, 77, 80, 94 and 8 and 85 Freeborn county. Later districts 21 and 48 in Waseca county were added. A substantial addition was constructed in 1954 and 55 and was dedicated on December 4, 1955. Another addition was completed in the spring of 1960. It included four elementary classrooms, an elementary library and a modern cafeteria.

The 1961-62 term opened on September 5, 1961, with G. T. Norswing as superintendent and Arleigh Kraupa as principal. The faculty consists of about 40 teachers. The students are transported in 13 busses owned by the district. The present

enrollment is 817. Mrs. Herbert Sponberg is in charge of the lunch program. With the erection of the new addition in 1955, the New Richland-Hartland district No. 827, has one of the best constructed school plants and well organized programs among the grade and high schools in the state of Minnesota. The following men serve on the board of education, Dr. A. G. Flor, Dr. Geo. H. Olds, Donald Smith, Leo Miller, Eldor Schoenrock and Howard Recknor.

The first school building built in 1878 was sold in 1901 to H. A. Anderson and was moved to the location of the Land O' Lakes Hatchery and was later purchased by J. W. Romine and still later sold to Land O' Lakes. This building was dismantled in August and September of 1961 to make room for a new building.

I am sure that some important events have been omitted. I quote a line from Alexander Pope who said "To err is human - - to forgive divine."

Going to New Richland July Fourth, 1909



This crowd of people was bound for a Fourth of July celebration at New Richland in 1909. The picture was taken at the Waseca depot, located at the intersection of the two railroads here. At the left can be seen what

was later the Sanders Hotel. Gates at the crossing were manually operated. The picture post card was addressed to the New Richland Star and a note read: "1,025 by actual count."

WILTON VILLAGE

First Waseca County Seat Platted in 1856

I have been asked by many to write a history of the Village of Wilton, which by many writers has been referred to as a ghost town. Before I start the history, I want to give a short mention of several towns in Southern Minnesota which are listed in the same category as Wilton.

MEMORY TOWNS

In my travels in Southern Minnesota I have learned of many so called ghost towns. I never liked that name so I have coined a new name for such towns, I call them "Memory Towns." I will name a few of them.

Mininger City was platted in 1856. This town was platted in Dakota county three miles west of Hastings on the shore of the Mississippi river. The city grew to a population of nearly 1,000 inhabitants in 1858, but lost them almost over night when the steam boats decided to make Hastings the stopping place.

Wasioja in Dodge county was a booming town in the 1860's. The Wasioja Seminary, now no more, held forth there for many years. At least two students from Waseca county enrolled there. One was William Stearns, father of Mrs. William Gutfleisch of Waseca. The other was Cora Stearns, who later married William Root; their son Birch Root passed away a few years ago. William and Cora were children of E. B. Stearns, the first county commissioner of Waseca county.

In Le Sueur county there are at least two Memory Towns. They are Cordova and Ottawa. At one time there were more than forty houses in Cordova.

SEVEN MEMORY TOWNS IN WASECA COUNTY

In Waseca county I find seven such towns. Some of them are now only memories. Empire in Iosco township was a lively village in 1856. It was one of three in 1857 that wanted to be named the county seat of the newly formed County of Waseca but it lost out to Wilton and shortly after that it died a fast death. It is now all under cultivation.

Okaman near Elysian in Janesville township was platted in 1856. It thrived for a short time. Some of the land is still in lots.

Old Janesville was platted in 1856 on the west side of Lake Elysian on the south tip. This village flourished until 1869 when the Winona and St. Peter Railroad, now Chicago North Western, extended the railroad west from Waseca. A new town was platted called East Janesville. Shortly after that many buildings from old Janesville were moved to East Janesville and some buildings were sold to the farmers and some were burned down and in a short time old Janesville was nothing but memories.

A town site named after a town in England, Waterlynn, was laid out in Otisco township in 1856 on the land now owned by Clarence Senske, just across the LeSueur River from Wilton Village. At the time it was laid out, the promoters expected the town would be a strong rival to Wilton. A store, a saw mill and a hotel were erected on the new site. The store and the saw mill did a flourishing business but the hotel was a losing proposition and it burned down in 1858 and the store and the saw mill moved away so that was the last of this town which bore an enchanting name.

The first town of Otisco was laid out in sections 29 and 30 in Otisco township. That farm is now owned by Albert and Rose Krause. This town was laid out in July 1857 by Warren Bundy and S. S. Goodrich. A saw mill and a store were erected in the fall of 1857—also a post office was established in the same year. Owen Salisbury was the first postmaster. In 1885, an historian wrote the following lines about the town. I quote, "Although doubtless the proprietors indulged in golden dreams of the prospective importance and business prosperity of the place, its history can be summed up in a few words. Where once they hoped to hear the busy whirl of machinery or the ceaseless hum of commercial activity, now resounds only to the low of kine or the whistle of the plow boy at his work and is covered with nodding corn and bending grass."

ST. MARY

The Village of St. Mary was platted in February 1857 on section 33 in St. Mary township by Chamberlin, Bailey and Co. From the beginning it sprang up as fast as weeds in a fertile soil. St. Mary, along with Empire and Wilton sought the county seat of Waseca county but likewise with Empire it lost out to Wilton. Several stores were erected and did a good business. Warren Smith, father of the late Charles Smith, conducted a general store until Wilton was named the county seat and he moved his store there. He was elected County Treasurer and later moved to Waseca. The Village of St. Mary went the same way as the other first towns. All that remains there now is the St. Mary Catholic church and a couple of homes.

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A cross-roads town was laid out in section 4, Freedom township, in 1858. It was called Peddler's Grove and lasted to 1880. The farm on which the town was laid out is now owned by Frank Amberg.

I will now endeavor to write as complete a history as possible about Wilton, the first county seat of Waseca county. I have secured all the material I can find in connection with the history of Wilton. Wilton was platted 27 years before I was born and at the time I was born, the business part of the town had vanished. I still remember the dilapidated condition of the old Globe Hotel that used to stand to the left as you drove into Wilton from Waseca.

I want to go back to the year of 1853 to get a better picture of events. Originally the territory of Minnesota was divided into nine counties. Wabasha county occupied the greater part of Southeastern Minnesota. Dakota laid west of Wabasha county. In 1852, Hennepin county was carved out of Dakota county and in 1853 Goodhue, Fillmore, Scott, LeSueur, Sibley, Blue Earth, Rice and Nicollet counties were carved out of Wabasha and Dakota counties.

ASA G. SUTLIEF FIRST SETTLER IN WILTON

When Asa G. Sutlief settled in what is now known as Wilton township in 1854, that township and seven other townships in the two western tiers of what is now Waseca county were a part of Blue Earth county. The eastern tier of townships, now Blooming Grove, Woodville, Otisco, and New Richland, were a part of Rice county. By a legislative act of February 20, 1855, the counties of Olmsted, Freeborn, Mower, Dodge, Faribault and Steele were created, and the old boundary lines were changed. Steele county embraced all of what is now Waseca county and eight of the western two tiers of the first Steele county. After Steele county was organized in 1855, a plan was discussed quite frequently about

the possibility of whether Dodge county, that had sixteen townships, would be in favor of attaching the western tiers of townships to Steele county. In February, 1856, an act was passed by the legislature making the desired change and the townships of Merton, Havana, Aurora and Blooming Prairie became a part of Steele county.

This suited the people of Mantorville as the Village had been located too far east in Dodge county. This gave Wilton a chance to become the county seat of what is now Waseca county. February 27, 1857, an act was passed by the legislature creating Waseca county. This established county lines of Dodge, Steele and Waseca counties as they have remained to the present time.

COUNTY SEAT BATTLE

One battle was over and the next was the county seat controversy. The first battle was in 1856 when many settlers fought legislation which made the Waseca area a county. The settlers organized to oppose the possibility of a new county. The late James E. Child was very strong against a new county and he was appointed chairman. He traveled on foot for many days and nights securing signatures to a petition opposing the dividing Steele county into another county. The petitions were forwarded to the senator and representative of the district of which Steele county was a part but to no avail and as was mentioned before, Waseca county became a county on February 27, 1857.

The second real rivalry was about where the county seat should be located if the legislature would pass an act creating a new county. In 1856, three towns were platted, all with a strong ambition of being named the county seat. The three were Empire, St. Mary and Wilton.

The bill creating Waseca county was passed by the legislature on February 27, 1857. The bill was signed by J. B. Brisbin, President of the Council (Senate) and J. W. Furber, Speaker of the House. I

want to quote parts of sections 2 and 3 of Bill No. 50. "The said County of Waseca is hereby declared to be an organized county and on the first Monday in June, 1857, the legal voters of said county shall hold an election (which was June 1st.) at their several established precincts for county officers, which officers shall hold their respective offices until the next general election. At the said election on the first Monday in June, 1857, the legal voters of said county shall select a place to be the seat of Justice for the said county of Waseca and the place receiving the greatest number of votes shall be the permanent county seat of said county, and be it further enacted, that the Governor shall appoint three commissioners who shall meet at Wilton on the third Monday of March A.D. 1857 and establish the election precincts in Waseca county, appoint judges of election and give notice to the several precincts of the time and place of holding such election and who shall have power to perform the duties of county commissioners as in organized counties provided, however, they shall have no power to establish the county seat of said county. Section (4). The Governor shall also appoint a sheriff and register of deeds who shall qualify and enter upon their duties of their respective offices as soon as appointed and notified of the passage of this act and continue in their term of office until their successors shall have been elected and qualified as herein provided."

Governor Willis A. Gorman appointed the following officers to hold office until the first election which was held on June 1, 1857. County Commissioners John C. Ide, John M. Bliven and Henry W. Peck. He also appointed Nathaniel Garland sheriff and Tarrant Putnam register of deeds. As ordered by Governor Gorman, the newly appointed Board of County Commissioners met at Wilton on March 16, 1857. Their main job at this meeting was to divide the county into five voting precincts and the board agreed upon the fol-

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lowing plan. Precinct No. 1 was called Swavesey and was comprised of Blooming Grove township and the north half of Woodville township. The second precinct was called Empire and the township of Iosco, the north half of St. Mary township and all the land east of Lake Elysian in Janesville township made up the second precinct. The third precinct which was called Wilton consisted of the following territory—the south half of Woodville and St. Mary townships and the north two-thirds of Wilton and Otisco townships. The fourth precinct which was called Otisco and the following territory made up the precinct: The south one-third of Wilton and Otisco townships and Vivian, Byron and New Richland townships. The smallest precinct, No. 5, was called Elysian and it took in all the land west of lake Elysian in Janesville township. At this meeting clerks and judges were chosen for each precinct. Everything was ready for the eventful day, June 1, when the voters went to the polls to decide which village would be the first county seat of Waseca county and also elect the first county officers. The results by precincts on the county seat question were as follows:

Precinct	Wilton	St. Mary	Empire
Swavesey	51	33	23
Empire	11	49	100
Wilton	189	119	1
Otisco	58	2	0
Elysian	23	4	2
Total	332	207	126

Wilton having received the largest number of votes became Waseca county's first county seat.

OFFICERS CHOSEN AT FIRST COUNTY ELECTION

At the same election the following county officers were elected: E. B. Stearns of Otisco, L. C. Wood of Woodville and David Smith of Iosco as county commissioners. The following were the other newly elected officers to hold office until the next general election: J. W. Crawford of Janesville, register of deeds; Nathaniel Garland of Wilton, sheriff; H. W. Peck of Iosco, county surveyor; W. S. Baker of Otisco, treasurer; and M. S. Green of Iosco, county attorney.

The campaigning and voting was over and Wilton started a real boom. Many stores, shops and homes were built including the court house. This court house burned down on April 3, 1869. After the fire the offices were moved into a wagon shop. That gave the Waseca promoters of moving the court house another argument in favor of Waseca.

In 1940, the Waseca County Historical Society erected a cement shaft and a bronze plaque marking the spot where the first court house once stood. Louis Ewest was responsible for having the shaft erected. The State Highway Department erected an historical marker calling attention to the place where the first county seat was located. This marker is placed at the second cross road going south from Waseca on Trunk Highway 13. At the dedication of the plaque at Wilton on October 6, 1940, the Hon. H. M. Gallagher spoke briefly of the first

judge that presided at the first court held in the court house at Wilton.

WILTON PLATTED IN 1856

In the autumn of 1855 a village was surveyed and laid out by A. B. Cornell, J. H. Abbott and W. F. Pettis of Owatonna and James E. Child, John Jenkins and D. J. Jenkins of Waseca county. Shortly afterwards James E. Child and John Jenkins gave up their claims to the town site and others took their places. Wilton was legally platted in 1856, the same year that Minneapolis was platted. The promoters of Wilton expected the town to grow to be a large town in a short time. One reason that the town did not flourish at its start was attributed to the feeling of the settlers who were strong against Wilton becoming a town. They did everything they could to stop the erection of any homes and buildings. There were several buildings in process of erection in the spring of 1856. One Sunday morning in April a fire destroyed several partly completed buildings. How the fire was started was never learned. The building boom stopped until the fall of 1856 when John C. Ide and A. B. Cornell brought in a saw mill and Mr. Ide became part owner of the town site. The difficulties between the promoters and the settlers were adjusted and during the winter the town began to grow. During the coldest weather stores, shops, hotels and residences were put up so that by spring of 1857 it had the appearance of a lively village.

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WILTON BOOMED IN 1857

In the spring of 1857 many men came to Wilton. I am only mentioning some of them who became prominent in Waseca county. The first carpenter of Wilton was a man named Buel Welsh who came to Wilton in the fall of 1856. He was never admitted to the Bar but practiced in justice courts for 25 years. A. J. Woodbury came to Wilton in 1856 and put up a hotel which he called the Washington. He ran this hotel until 1862. The Globe Hotel was also built in 1856 by E. A. Rice. Ownership of this hotel changed hands several times, a Mr. Gray was the last owner. This Hotel was a happy meeting place for many during the heyday of Wilton. The old building stood in loneliness for many years after the village was deserted, then it was finally wrecked.

The first store erected in Wilton in the winter of 1855-56 was by Paige and Baker. They came to Wilton from Oswego, N. Y. Thomas L. Paige acted as the first clerk of court. In 1858, he sold his interest in the store and returned to New York state.

In 1856, a Scotsman by the name of McLauren built a one-story store and opened a saloon and grocery store. In the same year John C. Hunter joined him as a partner and they conducted the business until the start of the Civil War.

A. E. Smith in 1856 built a store building and operated a general merchandise store which he later sold to Luther and Chase.

N. E. Strong started a drug store in 1856.

J. D. Andrews started the second drug store in 1857.

EARLIEST STORES IN WILTON AND IN COUNTY

P. C. Bailey started the first hardware store in Waseca county in Wilton in 1857. In 1860, J. H. Wightman bought a half interest in the business. A few years later Mr. Wightman sold his interest to George Watkins. They continued to operate their store

in Wilton until 1867 when they moved to Waseca where they built the first hardware store. Mr. Bailey in 1861 was elected to the House of Representatives in the Minnesota Legislature and in 1863 he was elected County Treasurer. He served in the State Senate in 1877-78, and as the fifth mayor of the City of Waseca. Mr. Bailey's first wife died in 1865. In 1867, he married Lordina Dodge and they became the parents of two children, Fred and Lena. Lena married Elmer Armitage and the couple resided in Waterville until their deaths. I am sure there might be some old timers who can remember Mr. Bailey.

J. W. Johnson & Co. started a store in 1858 and conducted their general merchandise store until 1867 when they moved to Waseca.

J. W. Claff in the fall of 1857 built another store which he conducted for a year when he sold out and moved out of Wilton.

H. P. Norton started the first blacksmith shop in Wilton which was also the first in Waseca county in 1856. He was the father of the late Charles N. Norton who passed away on March 16, 1960. He was the last person born in the old village of Wilton to die. His birth date was November 2, 1865. H. P. Norton's younger brother, C. O. Norton, worked for him until Mr. Norton entered public life and C. O. Norton conducted the shop on his own and remained in Wilton until 1867 when he started the first blacksmith shop in the new Village of Waseca. H. P. Norton was elected clerk of court in 1859 to fill a vacancy. In 1861, he was appointed postmaster of Wilton. In 1863, he was elected register of deeds. While he was serving as register of deeds he was made agent for the American Express Company and held that office for many years. He was a charter member of Wilton Masonic Lodge No. 24 and also became a charter member of Tuscan Masonic Lodge No. 77 which received its charter on January 14, 1869.

The first wagon maker was A. T. Peck who commenced business in Wilton in the spring of 1857.

C. G. Runnerstrom (grandfather of the late Arnold Runnerstrom) started a meat market in the early '60's.

Many other stores were started and many changes were made in ownership in the late '50's and '60's in those shops mentioned above and shortly after 1870 one by one they moved to some other town or closed shop for good and what promised to grow into a large city finally faded away. At one time Wilton boasted of twenty stores and saloons.

BENCH AND BAR

The first law suit took place in the summer of 1856 at Wilton and as near that I can learn this law suit was held in a justice court. It involved two brothers who tried to jump a claim from an early settler and nearly killed Mr. Krassin. This case was tried before Justice John Jenkins. The culprits later moved out of the county.

At the Village of Wilton, then county seat of Waseca county, on the 12th day of October, 1857, Hon. Charles E. Flandreau, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Minnesota opened the first District Court in Waseca county. From the records I find that on the first day of court the Grand Jury was absent and no civil cases appeared on the court calendar. The court adjourned until the afternoon when the Grand Jury was impaneled. After due deliberation the Grand Jury on the morning of the 14th returned an indictment against William H. Chamberlain and others. This was a case without much merit and at the next term of court the indictment was quashed.

FIRST MURDER TRIAL HELD IN WILTON

The Grand Jury returned an indictment for murder against Peter Farrell. The court ordered a bench warrant for the apprehension of the guilty party. It seems that Farrell had too much to drink and he got

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into a argument with his best friend and neighbor, Jacob Hagadorn and Farrell stabbed him. This fracas occurred at the Wheeler Hotel and bar at the old town of Empire in a drunken row. This happened the day before the county seat election in 1857. Farrell was arrested and sentenced to Stillwater to be confined in the state penitentiary but managed to escape and left the county and was never apprehended.

John Wheeler and Richard Toner were also indicted by the Grand Jury as accessories to the murder. They stood trial but were finally acquitted by the jury and discharged by order of the Court.

On September 2, 1858, the second term of District Court in Waseca County commenced with the Hon. N. M. Donaldson, Judge of the Fifth Judicial District, presiding. Waseca county remained in that district until 1957 when the district now number 14 was enlarged. In 1959, it was changed to District No. 3 and it is now comprised of eleven counties and five District Judges. The first civil suit tried in Waseca county came before this court and was that of Joseph T. Dexter vs. David A. Springer, an appeal from Justice Court.

ATTORNEYS

As near as I have been able to find out the following attorneys practiced law in the Village of Wilton but not at the same time. John Bradish was appointed by the Board of County Commissioners at a meet-

ing held on April 6, 1857, to serve as County Attorney. M. S. Green served one year as County Attorney. James E. Child held the office of County Attorney for two years. H. D. Baldwin held the office for three years. W. T. Kittredge also served as County Attorney. Two other attorneys practiced law in Wilton, namely P. Brink Enos and George LaDow. They opened a law office in August 1863. In April 1859 Alexander Johnston was admitted to the bar and began the practice of law at Wilton.

NEWSPAPERS

The first paper published in Waseca county was the Home Views which made its appearance at Wilton on March 13, 1860. It was edited by J. W. Crawford but was published by A. B. Cornell of Owatonna. Later in the summer W. T. Kittredge purchased it and continued to publish it until the latter part of 1860 when it ceased publication.

The second paper that started in Wilton on March 1861 was The Waseca Home Views. The proprietors were Alexander Johnston and S. J. Willis. This paper was printed on their own press, the first printing press in Waseca county. In the fall of 1861 they moved the press and material to Faribault but they continued to publish the Home Views at Faribault. In the latter part of 1863 Alexander Johnston became the sole proprietor and discontinued the Waseca publication.

The Waseca Courier was the third newspaper that was born in the old

Village of Wilton. The first issue bore the date of January 21, 1863. It was a small paper and was edited by John C. Ide and printed in Owatonna. It was born sickly and it died in December of the same year.

WILTON WEEKLY NEWS

In November 1863 the press and other materials that had been used to print the Home Views at Faribault was purchased by H. D. Baldwin who practiced law in Wilton. James Mowatt was employed as printer and publisher and James E. Child as editor. The first issue of the Wilton Weekly News was published on December 8, 1863. In the last part of 1864 Mr. Child became the sole owner. This paper continued to be published at Wilton until the latter part of October, 1867, when the press and equipment were moved to the new town of Waseca. The name was changed to the Waseca News. Mrs. William Gutfleisch some years ago found a copy of the Wilton Weekly News bearing the date of April 20, 1865. Mrs. Gutfleisch presented this paper to the Waseca County Historical Society. The Society had it framed and is on display at the Historical Museum. I have spent some time reading the edition of April 20, 1865, and I will mention a few items that appeared in that issue. The big story was about the assassination and death of President Lincoln who was shot at the Ford Theater at Washington on Friday evening of April 14, 1865. He passed away on Saturday, April 15, 1865.

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Today there are people who are against the local papers carrying advertising of firms that are in business in neighboring towns, that was not the plan of the Wilton Weekly News in 1865 for in the issue of April 20, 1865, I find that many firms from Faribault carried ads. I also find that the News carried liquor ads. Back in 1865 there were at least four saloons in Wilton during its boom days.

Post office hours were as follows, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily and from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. on Sunday. A notice ordered by the postmaster read:

"N. B. Proposals will be received until May 5, 1865, for carrying the mail once a week from June 1, 1865, to June 1, 1866, between Wilton and Morristown."

News traveled slow in 1865. An item appeared in the Weekly News concerning the assassination of President Lincoln and Secretary Seaward. News reached Wilton on Monday morning, April 17, 1865, by a passenger on board the stage from Winona. Later in the day an immigrant dropped into the newspaper office with an extra published by the Owatonna Gazette. The Weekly News published an extra in the afternoon telling about the assassination of the President. This was the first extra ever printed in Waseca county. On Tuesday every business place and many homes were draped in mourning. "A deeper and heartfelt sorrow it has never been our lot to witness," said the News.

The late C. O. Norton, the village smithy, ran an ad stating that horse shoeing was his specialty.

The following professional cards appeared:

M. S. Gove M.D. office and residence on Broadway opposite the Drug Store.

George A. LaDow attorney and counsellor of Law and Notary Public Office in the court house.

H. P. Norton Register of Deeds

and Agent for the American Express Co. Office Court House - Wilton, Minnesota.

H. D. Baldwin - James E. Child
Baldwin and Child
Attorneys' at Law

Wilton, Waseca County, Minnesota

After the removal of the News from Wilton to Waseca in the fall of 1867 the county seat was left without a newspaper and so continued until the spring of 1869 when W. D. Palmer started a paper called the Wilton Courant. The first issue was printed on March 6, 1869. Mr. Palmer ran the paper for two weeks when he sold his interest to A. J. Clark. He ran the paper until August 17, 1869, when the printing outfit and office equipment was removed to Sherburne county and that was the last paper to bear the name of Wilton, Minnesota.

DOCTORS

I am indebted to Dr. B. J. Gallagher for the history of the doctors who practiced in the Village of Wilton.

Dr. M. S. Gove, the first actively practicing physician in Waseca county came to Wilton in 1858. He was a public spirited man and took a great interest in all public matters. In 1859, he was elected County Commissioner and was made chairman of the board. At one time he held the office of County Superintendent of Schools. When the Waseca County Horse Thief Detectives were organized in 1864, he was made its first president and was very active until his death which occurred on December 1, 1874. Dr. Gove fought for the retention of the county seat in Wilton. When Waseca became the county seat at the election of November 8, 1870, Wilton was left high and dry five miles from the railroad, he surrendered to the inevitable and moved to Waseca in 1871. His professional cards appeared in the first and in all the subsequent issues of the Waseca News which was started in Wilton in 1860 under the name of the Wilton Weekly News. They

seem rather modest in view of the fact that he as far as it is known was the only regular physician in the county at that time.

M. S. Gove MD

Physician, Surgeon and Obstetrician
Office Broadway-next door west

Wilton House, Wilton, Minn.

Conversant for 14 years with disease experience in hospitals and 10 years of extensive practice in the West may entitle him to a portion of the patronage. Since he sought a portion of the patronage it would seem that he must have had competition of some kind. Dr. Gove is buried in the Wilton cemetery.

Dr. William Murphy was born in Ireland on October 7, 1815, and he came to America when he was three years old. The family settled in Philadelphia. When a young man, he attended the Hahnemann Medical College in Philadelphia where he received his degree in medicine in the early 1850's. He developed lung trouble so he decided to go West on account of the climate which was supposed to cure lung disease. He with his family arrived in Wilton in December 1857. It is not known that he was very active in his profession. He died in Wilton on May 14, 1859. He was the father of John F. Murphy who learned the printer's trade and became a partner with James E. Child in publishing the Waseca Herald.

Dr. J. P. Berrington's first card appeared in the Waseca paper on October 25, 1871, stating that his office was in his house at Wilton. This was a year after Wilton lost the county seat and Dr. Gove moved to Waseca. His card appeared for the last time on April 1, 1874. Nothing more is known of him.

When Dr. Berrington left Wilton about April 1, 1874, Dr. R. Parkins succeeded him but his card only appeared for two months until June 1, 1874. It is thought that he moved to Minnesota Lake. By that time Wilton was fast becoming a memory town.

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HORSE THIEF DETECTIVES

One of the oldest organizations in the State of Minnesota was organized in the court house at Wilton on February 16, 1864, and it is still active and holds annual meetings. Many of the descendants live in Waseca county. John Arentsen is the oldest living member who if the Lord is willing, will observe his 100th birthday on July 11, 1962. According to the two histories of Waseca county, the reason for organizing this society was as follows. In June 1862, a fine team of horses were stolen from Orrin Pease. The settlers were sure that a band of horse thieves resided in Waseca county. After the disappearance of Mr. Pease's horses, with the help of some settlers, the sheriff arrested three men in the possession of the horses. The thieves were convicted of larceny but pending an appeal to the Supreme Court the prisoners broke jail and escaped. This prompted the settlers to see what could be done to stop stealing in general, especially the stealing of horses. A meeting was called for the purpose of organizing the Waseca County Horse Thief Detective Society. At the meeting of February 16, 1864, William Brisbane acted as chairman and E. A. Smith was chosen as secretary. After some discussion Mr. Brisbane named the following men, E. B. Stearns, D. L. Whipple and B. A. Lowell as a committee to draft and present a constitution. The meeting was adjourned to February 27, 1864. At the February 27th meeting a draft of the constitution was presented and adopted. There were twenty-one articles originally adopted and later there were three more articles which made it twenty-four in all. The first permanent officers elected were Dr. M. S. Gove, president; William Brisbane, vice-president, and E. A. Smith, secretary. I am listing what seemed to be the first members of this unique society. W. L. Wheeler, Asa G. Sutlief, Wm. Brisbane, Dr. M. S. Gove, Geo. E. Brubaker, Noah Lincoln, B. A. Lowell, Ira G. Wood, Eugene A. Smith, W.

H. Young Sr., Joseph Bird, D. L. Whipple, Henry Watkins, Myron Blackburn, E. B. Stearns, J. K. Myers, Q. A. Heath, William Roddle, James E. Child, L. S. Wood, E. Plummer, Peter Vandyke, Austin Vinton, John Anderson, L. F. Peterson, Charles Johnson, Edward Schmidt and Ohadiah Powell.

Many descendants of the early members of this unique society are looking forward to 1964 when the society will observe its centennial.

PROCEEDINGS OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS RELATING TO WILTON

The first commissioners who were elected in the special election held on June 1, 1857, were E. B. Stearns of Otisco, L. C. Wood of Woodville and David Smith of Iosco. The board held their first meeting on July 6, 1857. This session was of a routine nature. The year 1857 witnessed hard times and that also applied to the county finances. The County Board members found themselves \$1,200 in debt, no money and without credit. At a special meeting of the County Board held on October 20, 1857, the board borrowed \$100 from Byron Clark. Mr. Stearns and Mr. Wood gave their personal notes with the interest rate of 6 per cent per month. Another special meeting was held on November 11, 1857, when it was necessary to borrow \$200 to meet the pressing demands of the creditors. The money was borrowed from George Snyder on a promissory note duly signed by E. B. Stearns and L. C. Wood. This note bore interest of 5 per cent per month. New Board of Commissioners E. B. Stearns, L. C. Wood and John Bailey met at the Court House January 4, 1858, and elected E. B. Stearns as chairman. At a meeting of the board on November 1, 1858, the Board appropriated \$400 to erect a bridge on what was then called the Wilton or Owatonna road. The meeting of the Supervisors (now County Commissioners) met on the 24th day of May 1859. Dr. M. S. Gove was

chosen as chairman at a meeting held on October 12, 1859. Dr. M. S. Gove, H. G. Mosher and J. W. LaPaul were appointed a committee to purchase the store building owned by Thomas L. Paige in the Village of Wilton for a court house with the Certificates of Tax Sales of Lands sold in 1858 and bid in by the county. The amount of said purchase not to exceed \$700. Later the building was purchased for that amount.

On the 11th day of January 1860 the new board met and elected Philo Woodruff as chairman. At the March session it was ordered that the sheriff be instructed to build a jail in the rear of the court house to be at least 16 x 18 feet in size, one story high, to be built of lumber lined with sheet iron for the sum of \$300 in Tax Certificates of 1858. At this meeting liquor licenses were issued to Hall and Johnson owners of the Wilton House. A liquor license was also granted to G. H. Woodbury of the Washington Hotel at Wilton. These licenses were each for \$50. The two licenses were the first issued to legal liquor stores although liquor had been sold as other merchandise ever since the establishment of grocery stores.

COURT HOUSE BURNS

On April 3, 1869, fire started in the jail and led to the court house. The fire was not discovered before 8:00 a.m. It was then out of control. By hard and dangerous work the citizens of Wilton saved the books, papers, records and furniture belonging to the county. A building owned by Henry J. Meyers and leased to LaDow, Hall and J. H. Wightman hardware store was next to be destroyed. Power's and LaDow's law library and G. A. LaDow's household goods also suffered a total loss. The fourth building to be destroyed by the fire was Hall's Saloon and in less than two hours the whole block was a mass of smouldering ruins. Each building was insured for \$200, about one-tenth of its value. Mr. Shea the prisoner who was serving time for robbery was not severely burned but

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plenty scared. On April 12, 1869, the County Commissioners met in a special session. The temporary offices were located in the wagon shop of B. Bundsho and as near as I can learn they remained there until the county seat was removed to Waseca in the fall of 1870. The board of County Commissioners of 1870 was made up of the following men: William Byron, Robert Earl, O. Powell, John Buchout and R. F. Stevens. They held their last session at Wilton on September 10 and their first session in Waseca on November 17 at the new court house.

REMOVAL OF COUNTY SEAT

After the Winona and St. Peter Railroad was surveyed and Waseca was laid out as a town in 1867 there was much talk of removing the county seat from Wilton. Waseca village was incorporated in February 1868 shortly after it became a village. The first step was in 1869 when the legislature passed a bill for the Village of Waseca to issue bonds in the amount of \$5,000, the money to be used to build a new court house. In the same summer the court house in Wilton burned down which helped Waseca's chances. Petitions were filed asking for an election on the proposition giving the voters the right to vote on the question of removing the county seat. This question was voted on at the regular election held on November 8, 1870. Waseca won the contest on the question of the removal of the court house. The vote was as follows: For removal, 870; Against removal, 653. And now just to set the records straight you hear a lot of talk about the fact that Waseca stole the court house. The election was legally held. The only thing that maybe was not legal, in the sight of the law, was when the citizens of Waseca found out the result of the election they secured as many teams and hay racks and proceeded to Wilton to move the desks and records of all the county officials to Waseca. The late Sheriff Mike McDonough was a very good friend of mine. He used

to tell me his experience of that evening when he drove one team and wagon. They arrived in Wilton about 1:00 a.m. on November 9, 1870. They loaded desks and records and headed to Waseca. Most of the county officers rode along in the hay rack. Warren Smith, father of the late Charles A. Smith, who had been appointed County Auditor refused to move during the night but he moved into the new court house the next morning. The new court house was of brick construction. The size of the building was 40 x 50 ft. and two stories high. The first floor contained four offices, two on each side of the hall and at the rear of the building was a vault capable of holding all the records, books and papers of the county and the second floor was converted into a court room. The officers to occupy offices in the new court house and jail were G. R. Buckman, County Treasurer; Hiram A. Mosher, Register of Deeds; Warren Smith, County Auditor; Seth W. Long, Sheriff; B. S. Lewis, County Attorney; C. E. Crane, Surveyor; J. A. Canfield, Judge of Probate and Dr. M. S. Gove, Coroner. The Board of County Commissioners consisted of the following men Obadiah Powell, William Lee and H. G. Mosher. I can picture the ride from Wilton on this cold and moonlit night was an enjoyable ride and when they arrived in the morning they were met by a band. Moving of the court house was the beginning of the end of Wilton.

A Masonic Lodge was organized at the Village of Wilton under dispensation granted June 1, 1857. The Lodge received its charter on January 8, 1858, and it organized No. 24 with the following officers: Jesse I. Stewart, W.M.; J. C. Ide, S.W.; H. P. Norton, J.W.; E. A. Rice, Treasurer; H. S. Edmondson, Secretary; T. L. Paige, S.D.; Buel Welsh, J. D.; and John Magill, Tyler. For many years this was the most prosperous lodge in this part of the state and when the Lodge of Owatonna was about to be organized, Dr. Morehouse and others of that city came over to Wilton to be made Masons

that they might have enough Masons to form their Lodge. After the decline of Wilton and the removal of many of the Brethren to Waseca, Alma City and Janesville the Lodge declined until November 21, 1883, when under a dispensation of the Grand Lodge the Lodge was removed to Alma City. On the night of May 23, 1896, the Lodge room which was located over Daniel J. Richford's blacksmith and wagon shop was burned down with all of the lodge's records. Later after Pemberton was platted the Lodge moved there where it still holds lodge under the name and number Wilton 24. It is a very active Lodge.

Waseca Lodge No 17 Independent Order of Odd Fellows was organized at Wilton in 1867 and continued for many years. In 1883, it was consolidated with the Comee Lodge of Waseca, most of the members of the Wilton Lodge having removed to Waseca.

WILTON SEMINARY

The Wilton Seminary, a private school, was started in 1858 and closed for all time to come in April 1861, the first month of the Civil War. Dr. Williams was one of the instructors for a short time. Dr. Murphy died in Wilton on May 14, 1859. Dr. Murphy was the father of Murphy the printer, a partner with James E. Child of the Waseca Herald.

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 18

This district was organized in the late 50's. As Wilton grew it was necessary to build a two-story building in block 26 original plat of Wilton. When Ewald Gehring started to attend school the two-story building was still standing but only the ground floor was occupied.

It is interesting to know who served on the school board during its lifetime. In the list of officers you will find many persons who played an important part in the history of Waseca county. Following is the list of officers.

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and **JUSTINA KRASSIN CHILD**

Frank B. Goodspeed, grandson
Georgia M. Goodspeed, great-granddaughter
(Both life members of Waseca County
Historical Society and Waseca
County Horse Thief Detectives)

Directors: William Roddle, W. A. Henderson, T. J. Kerr, E. R. Krassin, Ferdinand Ewest, Fred Bartels, Walter Ewest, Ben Roesler, Ewald L. Gehring, Ben Krause and Henry Mokoff.

Treasurers: Jackson Turnacliff, William Roddle, August Senske, Julius Gehring, Walter Ewest, Ewald Gehring, Chester Gehring, Louis Ewest and Arlo Anton.

Clerks: Henry C. Woodbury, J. W. Cleland, Henry M. Buck, C. T. Lincoln, Eugene Turnacliff, L. J. Roesler, Wm. C. Roesler, Henry Hamilton, Samuel Roesler, Clarence Senske, Ben Roesler, Arthur Bartelt, Chester Gehring and Arvid Peterson.

I want to especially mention some of the early men who served on the school board. W. A. Henderson, a prosperous farmer and a stockholder and director of the First National Bank of Waseca for many years; E. R. Krassin, the son of Martin Krassin who came to Waseca county in 1855; Ferdinand Ewest and two of his sons, Walter and Louis, all served on the board at different times. Julius Gehring and his sons, Ewald and Chester, were members of the board at different times as were Henry Woodbury, son of A. J. Woodbury who built the first hotel in Wilton and H. M. Buck, father of Mrs. Edward Staehlin who resides in Waseca. Mr. Buck served as Mayor of Waseca in 1909. J. W. Cleland, father of Spencer and Edgar, served as Clerk of the District. August Senske and his son, Clarence, were members of the board at separate times.

In 1956, the voters of the district voted to consolidate with District No. 829. The final papers were signed on March 2, 1956. The last members who served on the board of District 18 were Henry Mokoff, Arvid Peterson and Arlo Anton.

In the fall of 1959 the Wilton township board sold the Town Hall located at Silver Lake and later they purchased District No. 18 school house and remodeled it into a very spacious town hall.

SIX CHURCHES WERE ORGANIZED IN WILTON

The pioneers of Waseca county were God-fearing people. Some 70 churches have had their beginning here. At the present time there are thirty-two active churches in the county. Of the first 15 marriages in Waseca county all but three were married by a Justice of the Peace.

The first church organized in the Village of Wilton was a Presbyterian church in 1862. This church lingered along for several years when it ceased to function. Rev. William McClelland was the last pastor. Two more churches were organized in the early 60's, namely the Methodist and the Baptist. They were active in 1887 according to the Steele and Waseca County History.

Wilton Evangelical Church. Evangelical work began at Wilton in 1862. The first families were M. Arndt and Martin Buschow. The Wilton Mission was created in 1866. A church was erected and they continued regular services in the meantime. An Evangelical church was organized in Waseca and shortly after the removal of the county seat to Waseca in 1870 many of the families moved to Waseca and they joined the Waseca church. The membership of the Wilton church slowly dwindled away.

The Trinity Church of Wilton. First I want to express my thanks to Rev. G. Malling for his help. The first proceedings were held in the German language and Rev. Malling translated the minutes of the meeting from German to English. In 1918, there was a pamphlet published with the histories of all the Missouri Synod Lutheran churches in Waseca county. The writer was unable to obtain the details which led to the founding of the Wilton organization. Perhaps no records were kept or they were lost. The earliest records of the church date from 1872 made by Rev. H. Sprengeler. Apparently the congregation had existed at this time. Rev. Sprengeler served the

congregation until 1876. Divine services were held in an old log house which stood where the present Town Hall now stands and this building served as the church until 1886.

January 2, 1886, was a sad day for the congregation because the congregation split in two. Eleven members remained with the old constitution and the Missouri Synod. The others by far a larger group, with the elders of the congregation accepted a new constitution and decided to join the Iowa Synod. On this day the congregation had decided to purchase another church building, probably the vacant Presbyterian church building.

After the division of the congregation the larger group took the purchased building, the smaller group, the Missouri Synod, retained the old building. The Iowa Synod congregation also retained the old name of the congregation which necessitated a re-organization of the old group which took place on February 24, 1886. The congregation was called the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Congregation. Pastor Andrew Mueller of Freedom served this so suddenly diminished group up to his retirement in September 1890. During this time the congregation built a small church 20 x 30 feet, later an addition was added. From 1890 to 1903 this congregation was served by several pastors. At the beginning of 1903 Pastor Ed. Firnhaber accepted a call to Iosco and Wilton and the church was served by him until 1910. During this time the church was enlarged by an addition 20 x 30 ft. as well as a tower and sanctuary. Up to 1910 the congregation did not have a resident pastor but in 1910 Wilton with Waseca called Rev. Edward Trapp to serve these two congregations. Pastor Trapp was ordained and installed on August 11, 1910. Since the congregation did not have a parsonage it purchased a house and four acres of land about one-fourth mile from the church. In 1917, a new parsonage and barn was built at a cost of \$3,500.

The Trinity Lutheran was re-or-

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ganized on February 24, 1886, with a membership of 14 voting members. First officers were August Bethke, chairman; Peter Ramming and August Schaltz, elders; Ferdinand Ewest, Peter Ramming and Conrad Fette, trustees. Rev. E. F. Wacholz served the congregation from 1923 until 1948 when the present Pastor G. Malling came to the Wilton church which is now the only church in the village. The Iowa Synod church disbanded several years ago. Some of the members joined the Waseca St. John's church and some joined the St. Peter church in Otisco township. This church was later moved to the Village of Otisco. Since the Rev. Malling became the pastor

of the Wilton Trinity it has had a steady growth. At present they have over 200 members. A very fine new church has been built during Rev. Malling's pastorate. The cornerstone was laid in July 1950 and the church was dedicated in July 1951.

Historical Notes Concerning the Trinity Lutheran church:

The oldest man in Waseca county was Karl Gottfried Trotz who was born in Germany on July 15, 1772, and died on October 31, 1879. He is buried in the Wilton cemetery.

The first child baptized in the church was born June 13, 1872, and was baptized on September 20, 1872. Anna Pauline Priese was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Johann Priese.

ter of Mr. and Mrs. Johann Priese.

First wedding was that of Karl Kugod and Emilie Lupke. They were married on March 23, 1873.

The original plat of Wilton was all the land in the south half of section one in Wilton. Julius Gehring purchased lots and streets from William Roddle which he farmed. Later Mr. Gehring petitioned the county board to have most of the lots and streets vacated and converted into broad acres in 1924.

Thanks for your patience. I hope that the younger generation will enjoy reading of the Memory Town of Wilton. . . Herman Peterson.

Pioneers

Who knows today, the toil those men endured
 Who faced the raging blizzard, fought the prairie fire?
 The risks those wives and mothers then incurred
 Who tamed the wilderness, barehanded, but inspired.

The soldier meets death quickly on the field,
 But pioneers must meet starvation, cold, disease,
 Drawn out for years, knowing they cannot shield
 Their little ones from the dangers such as these.

They left their sheltered homes for lands unknown
 And dug a bare existence from a stubborn soil,
 That they might have a homestead all their own
 To leave, so their descendants might enjoy the spoil.

May we be proud of such illustrious sires!
 And mothers who endured so much of toil. May we
 Who now enjoy the fruit of their desires
 Still strive to make our country what they'd have it be.

—Composed by R. E. Hodgson

**THE WASECA
JOURNAL**

**THE WASECA
HERALD**

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SHOPPER**

TELEPHONE 835-2220

WASECA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

With a sincere effort of Herman Panzram, the Waseca County Historical Society was organized on February 26, 1938.

The members who signed the first constitution were: A. F. Bartelt, R. T. Barry, L. H. Brandvold, Art Brisbane, W. A. Clement, J. P. Coughlin, Mrs. D. S. Cummings, Mrs. F. T. Day, R. E. Hodgson, G. P. Madden, H. A. Panzram, Mrs. H. A. Panzram, Herman Peterson, Arnold Runnerstrom, F. W. Senn, Mrs. R. P. Ward, Dana Wobschall, F. A. Wood. The following are living (in 1962): Mr. Brisbane, Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Madden, Mrs. Panzram, Mr. Peterson, Mr. Wobschall.

The first officers were: Mr. Panzram, president; Mrs. Cummings, vice president; C. H. Bailer, treasurer; Mr. Hodgson, secretary. Besides the officers other directors were: Mr. Senn, Mr. Wobschall, Mrs. F. A. Wood.

Present officers and directors are: Miss Violet Panzram, president; Frank Goodspeed, vice president; Frank Papke, treasurer; John J. Miller, secretary; also Mrs. John R. Bullard, George Clunis, D. M. Coughlin, Richard Sandberg, R. T. Youngberg.

The building committee is: R. E. Hodgson, chairman; D. M. Coughlin, Dr. B. J. Gallagher, E. F. Johnson, Harold Matson, Herman Peterson.

The membership committee is: Herman Peterson, chairman; Art Brisbane, Frank Papke, R. T. Youngberg. Anyone who desires to become a member write Herman Peterson, Waseca, Minn., or phone 835-1254.

Life Memberships are \$10.00

Memorial Memberships are \$25.00

OFFSET AND LETTERPRESS PRINTING—

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We were happy to have had the privilege of printing this book for the
Waseca County Historical Society

Phone 234-6651 — Janesville, Minnesota

“WHEN TROLDAHL PRINTS IT — — — YOU’RE SATISFIED”



The Trinity Lutheran Church is the only remaining one of six churches that were organized in Wilton, and it is still very active. Rev. G. Malling came to

Wilton in 1958 and during his pastorate, which consists of 200 souls, has built the present church.

A Fond Memory to the Pioneers who settled in Waseca County and with hard labor regardless of hardships laid the foundation for what is now one of the most prosperous counties in the state.

We salute the present generation of the pioneers who are following in the footsteps of their forefathers, who are happy to reside and work in a county of productive farms, lovely homes, factories, schools and churches.

MR. AND MRS. HERMAN PETERSON

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